AI.
January 2025 | aimagazine.com

TOP 10

AI SUSTAINABILITY SOLUTIONS

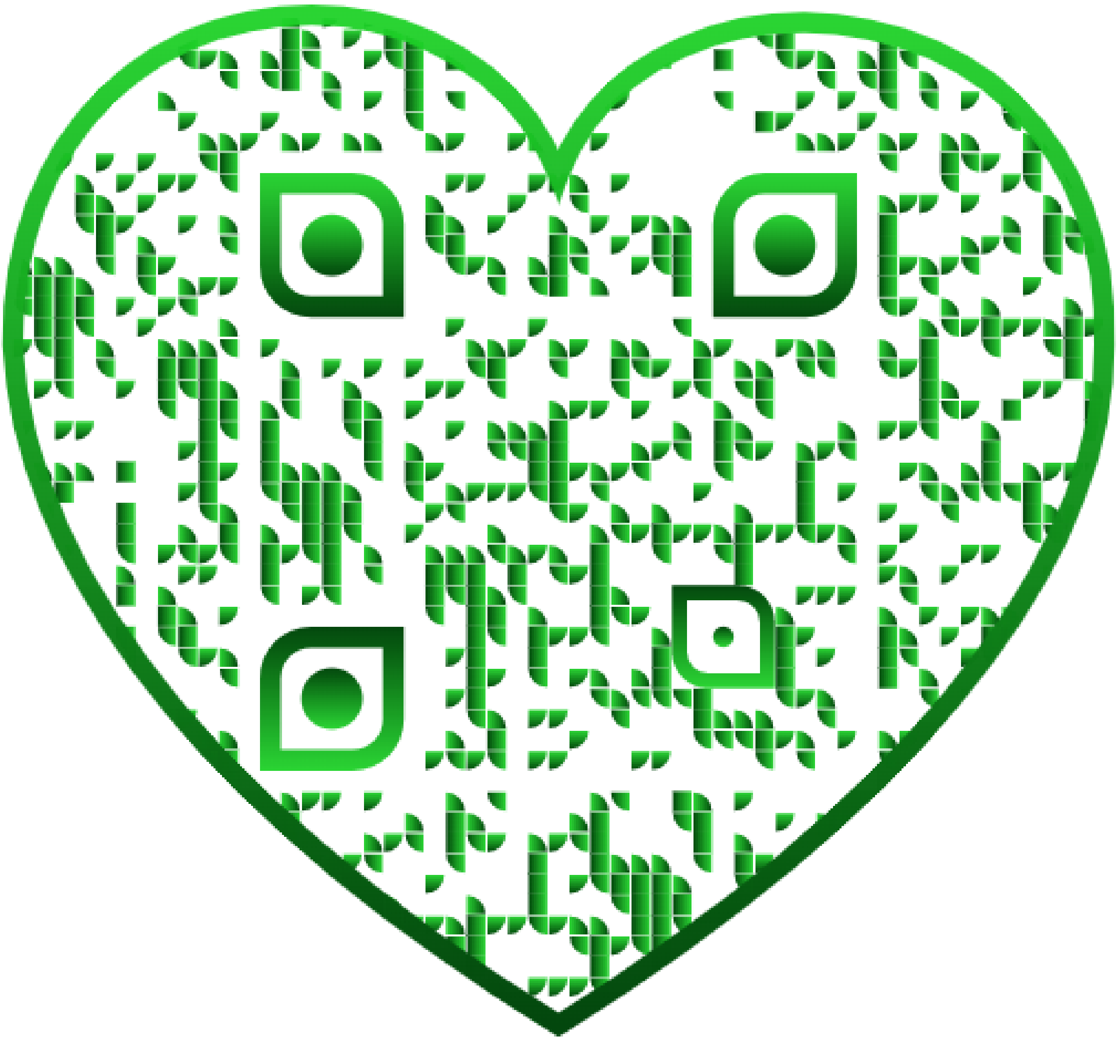
TEALIUM: MOVING FROM DATA INSIGHTS TO ACTION IN SECONDS

In a data-driven world, Tealium's executive team explains how its tag management solution empowers enterprises to transform insights into action

AI IN THE SKY
A look at AI's surging use among airlines

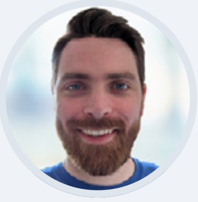
HEALTHCARE INNOVATIONS
Diagnosing AI's future in healthcare

FICO | **MOODY'S RATINGS** | **UST**



Webinar

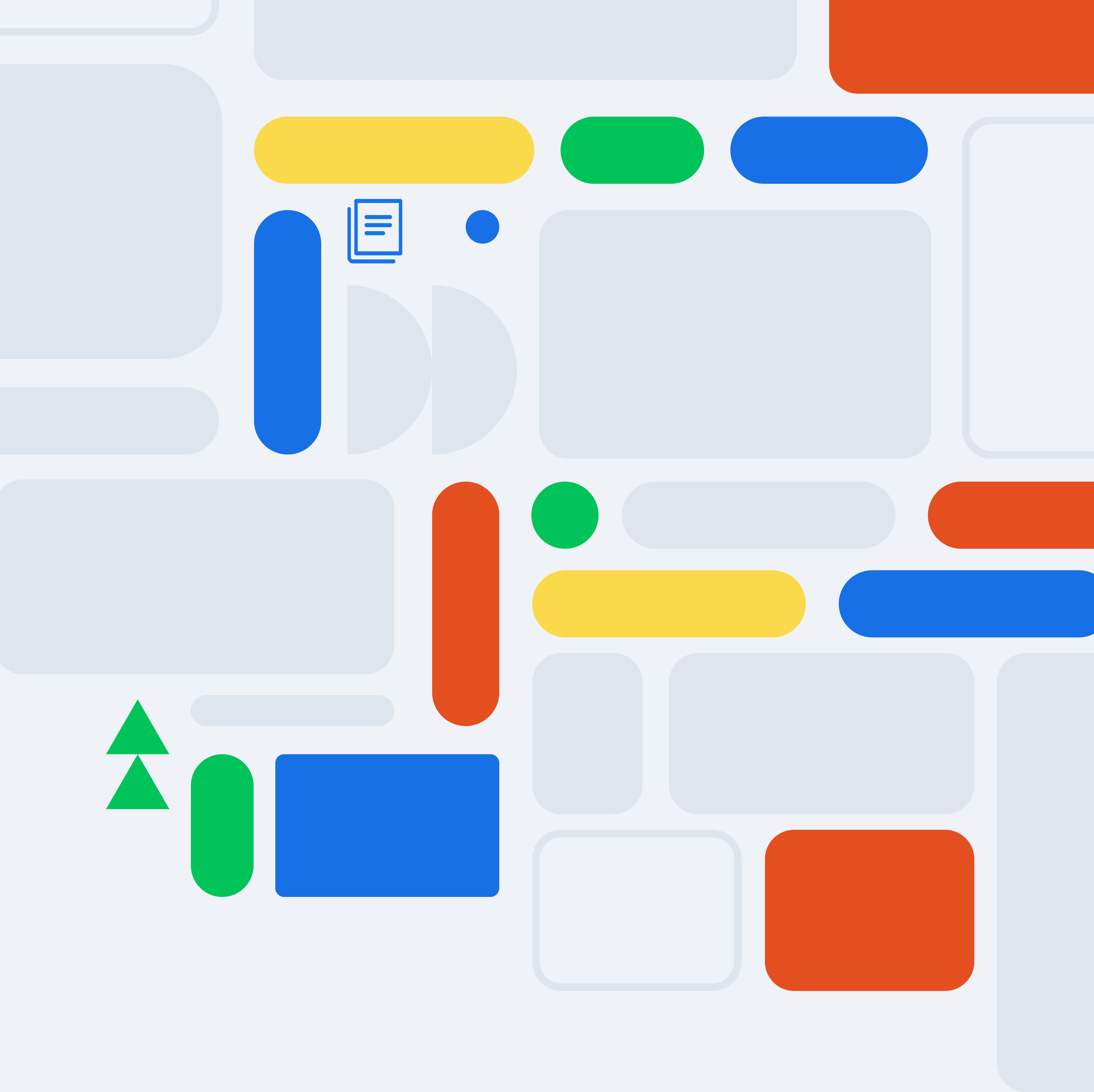
Cutting through the content chaos with AI



Tune in to a discussion with Thomas Clayson, Head of Solution Engineering at Contentful

Hear from Thomas Clayson as he shares industry insights and practical examples of how AI is **reshaping content** management strategies.

Discover the biggest hurdles companies face when **scaling content**, from dealing with increasing customer demands to keeping pace with rapid market changes.



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Discover how AI is revolutionising content workflows

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Tealium: Moving from Data Insights to Action in Seconds

As we enter January 2025, the continuation of last year's momentum suggests that this year is poised to be significant.

One company caught our attention when putting together this issue: Tealium. A company that sells enterprise tag management, an API hub, a customer data platform with machine learning, and data management products, it currently processes over nine billion data points a day, offering huge insights for customers and for opportunities for AI to work with a vast pool of data.

Being the first issue of the year, this issue dives deep into the trending topics likely to capture enterprise attention this year, from pioneering developments to widespread adoption.

At the forefront this year is AI investment, and we get UST's COO and Wolters Kluwer's CTO to offer insights into the trends, challenges, and strategic choices shaping the sector.

For everything else, we explore the synergy between AI and blockchain, the transformative influence of AI on airlines, and present data showing just how profoundly Gen AI has reshaped content creation.

It's a new year brimming with new possibilities, and I hope you are as eager as I am to explore them.

> *"It's a new year brimming with new possibilities"*

MARCUS LAW

Marcus Law

CONTACT ME

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for Strategic Segments,
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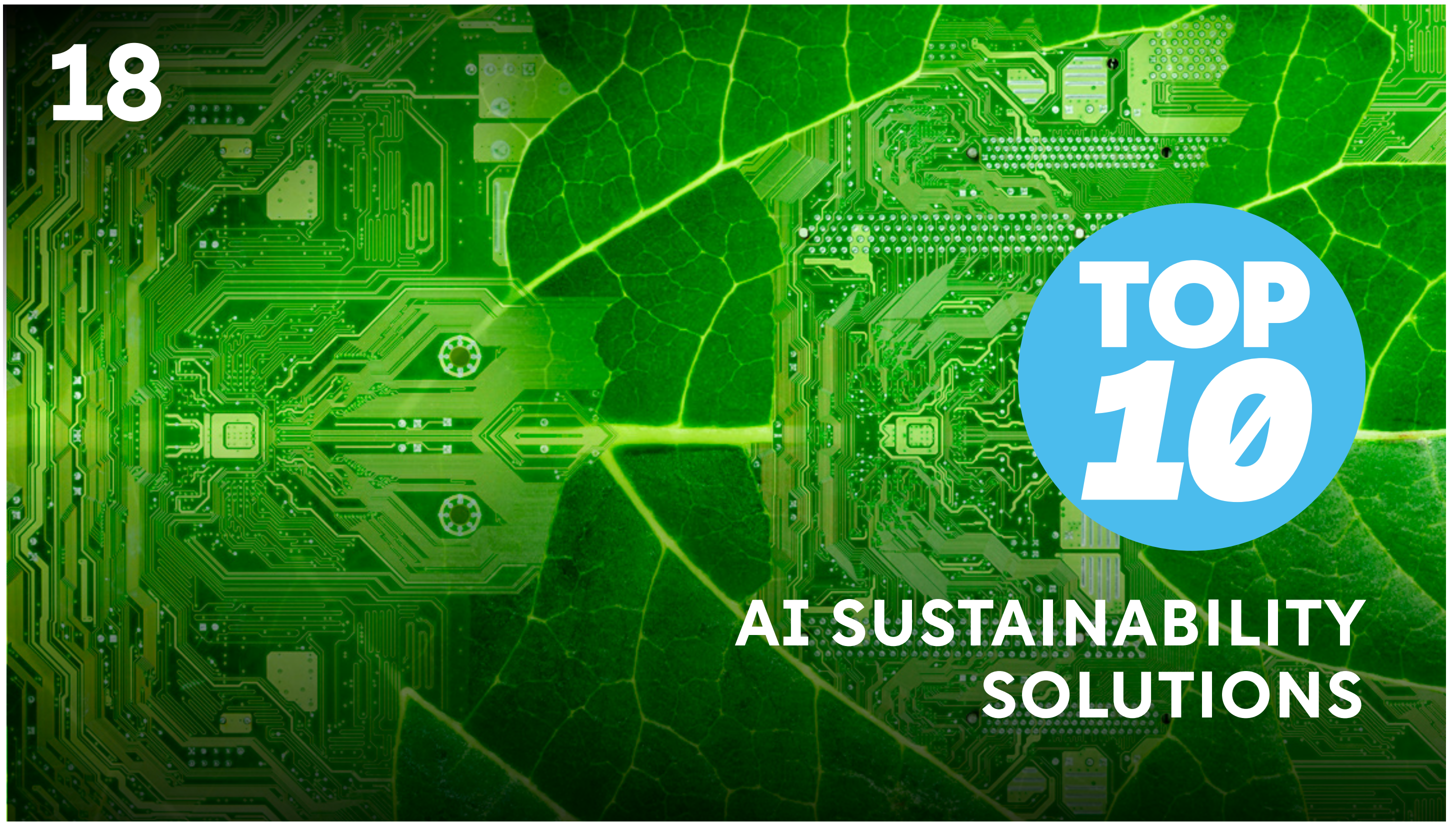

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AI
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AI
Top 10: Generative AI Tools
By Amber Jackson
November 08, 2023 • 8 mins
TOP 10
Generative AI Tools
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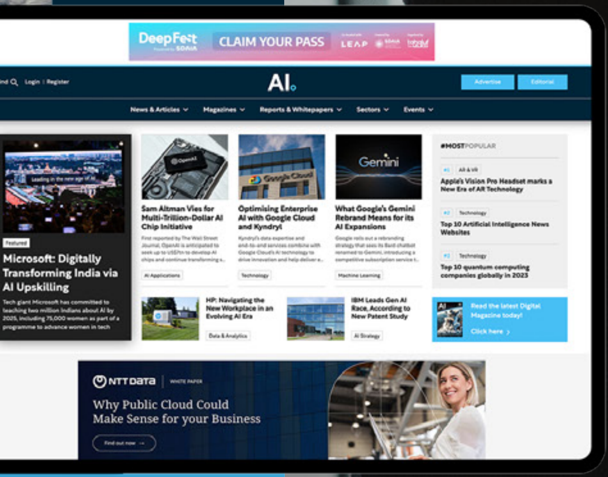
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Featured

Microsoft: Digitally Transforming India via AI Upskilling

Tech giant Microsoft has committed to teaching two million Indians about AI by 2025, including 75,000 women as part of a programme to advance women in tech

Sam Altman Vies for Multi-Trillion-Dollar AI Chip Initiative

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Why Public Cloud Could Make Sense for your Business

GREG WILSON
WORLD WIDE PUBLIC
SECTOR CHIEF TECHNOLOGY
OFFICER (GOVERNMENT)
MICROSOFT

PEOPLE MO

AI Magazine takes a look at the latest movers and shakers at executive level who are set to shake up their companies' operations

WRITTEN BY: KRISTIAN MCCANN

ARJUN A. SETHI

JOB FROM: **PARTNER AT KEARNEY**

JOB TO: **CHIEF GROWTH OFFICER FOR STRATEGIC SEGMENTS AT HCLTECH**

Arjun A. Sethi has been appointed as Chief Growth Officer for Strategic Segments at HCLTech. In this new role, Arjun will concentrate on government and global private equity sectors, leveraging his extensive industry experience to enhance HCLTech's engineering-led technology portfolio, digital services, and innovative Gen AI solutions.

With a career spanning 25 years at Kearney, where he served as Senior Partner and Vice Chair of Digital Transformation, Arjun brings a wealth of knowledge to HCLTech. His international experience encompasses the Americas, Middle East, and APAC regions, with a strong focus on government and private equity, as well as financial services.

HCLTech

> "I'm thrilled to join HCLTech at this pivotal moment, 25 years after my initial stint with the group"

OVES

**Arjun A. Sethi,
Chief Growth Officer
for Strategic Segments,
HCLTech**

Delphine Bernard, CFO, H2O.AI

Tony Alika Owens, CEO, Amperity

PEOPLE MO

DELPHINE BERNARD

JOB FROM: **CONSULTANT AT SPARKS FINANCE**

JOB TO: **CFO AT H2O.AI**

Delphine Bernard has been appointed Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of H2O.ai. With over 20 years of financial expertise in the technology sector, Delphine is set to play a pivotal role in steering H2O.ai's growth and success. Her extensive career encompasses significant positions at renowned companies, including Microsoft, Mars, and Skype.

TONY ALIKA OWENS

JOB FROM: **CHAIRMAN AT THE MANDATUM FOUNDATION**

JOB TO: **CEO AT AMPERITY**

Tony Alika Owens has been appointed as the CEO of Amperity, the AI-powered Lakehouse customer data platform. With over 20 years of experience in scaling global sales and enterprise operations, Tony joins Amperity during a period of significant market momentum, reinforcing the company's mission to transform complex customer data into actionable business insights.

Kenneth Mulvany,
Executive Chairman,
BenevolentAI

OVES

KENNETH MULVANY

JOB FROM: **BOARD MEMBER AT BENEVOLENTAI**

JOB TO: **EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN AT BENEVOLENTAI**

Kenneth Mulvany has been appointed as the Executive Chairman of BenevolentAI, a company applying advanced AI to revolutionise biopharma drug discovery and development.

Kenneth's extensive experience spans nearly three decades at the intersection of healthcare and technology, making him a prominent entrepreneur and investor in the biotechnology and artificial intelligence sectors.

TOP 10 AI SUST SOLU

With AI able to create code, optimise processes and automate solutions, we look at how these capabilities can be deployed to sustainable endeavours

WRITTEN BY: KRISTIAN MCCANN

The blossoming of AI has seen advances in a number of sectors, and sustainability is no exception.

Although AI itself generates a lot of emissions, it could

TAINABILITY TIONS

also be a key to advancing sustainability practices.

By providing tools that analyse data, automate processes and improve efficiency, AI can help industries manage resources, reduce waste and track their environmental impact.

Equally, this technology holds the potential to make sustainable practices more accessible and actionable, setting a new standard for environmental responsibility across sectors.

We explore how AI can become and is being used as a key driver of a more sustainable future.

10

WATCH NOW

How data is driving resilient and sustainable supply chains

OPTIMISING SUSTAINABLE LOGISTICS

PROMINENT COMPANY:

GOOGLE CLOUD

Logistics and distribution contribute significantly to corporate carbon footprints and AI offers solutions for greener operations. AI-powered route optimisation software incorporates sustainability as a key factor in planning, saving fuel and lowering emissions. By selecting the most efficient routes, logistics firms achieve both financial and environmental benefits.

09

Google DeepMind

WATCH NOW

How Google's DeepMind is using AI to tackle climate change

REDUCING ENERGY CONSUMPTION

PROMINENT COMPANY:

GOOGLE DEEPMIND

Despite increased investments in renewable energy, fossil fuels still dominate global energy use. AI can help businesses improve energy efficiency by analysing consumption patterns and offering insights to reduce waste without affecting productivity. Studies show AI-enabled models can boost efficiency by 10-40%, significantly cutting emissions and costs.

Google's DeepMind AI has helped the company reduce data centre energy usage by 30%, illustrating AI's role in lowering energy consumption across sectors.

08

Honeywell

WATCH NOW

Generative AI and the next-generation workforce

SAFER WORKPLACES

PROMINENT COMPANY:

HONEYWELL

Sustainability encompasses environmental, social and governance factors, and workplace safety is a crucial social component. AI-enabled computer vision enhances safety by ensuring compliance with rules and checking that workers wear proper safety gear. Smart cameras monitor production sites, alerting managers to potential hazards or violations.

This technology contributes to social sustainability by making work environments safer and minimising accidents, helping companies protect their workforce while meeting sustainability goals.

07

WATCH NOW
Backing Britain: turning plans into action

BETTER LEAK DETECTION IN PRODUCTION

PROMINENT COMPANY:
BP

Water leaks in buildings can waste up to 30% of consumption, a serious issue amid increasing global water shortages. AI-powered computer vision can help by identifying leaks of water and harmful chemicals within production plants, allowing quick intervention to prevent waste and contamination.

This technology enables businesses to reduce their environmental impact by conserving water and minimising chemical spills, essential in regions facing droughts and regulatory scrutiny over water use.

06

BOSCH

WATCH NOW
Artificial intelligence – enhancing safety and human intelligence

REDUCING DEFECTIVE PRODUCTION

PROMINENT COMPANY:
BOSCH

Around 17 billion items are returned globally each year, largely due to defects, resulting in significant CO2 emissions. AI-enabled computer vision systems reduce defective production by performing more accurate and efficient quality checks. Installed on conveyor belts, these systems identify issues early, minimising waste and lowering return rates.

This reduction not only improves sustainability by cutting emissions linked to returns but also benefits companies by lowering costs associated with returns and waste management.

05

BRAINBOX AI

WATCH NOW
BrainBox AI: the world's most advanced AI for commercial HVAC

FIGHTING AIR POLLUTION

PROMINENT COMPANY:
BRAINBOX AI

Air pollution is a severe public health crisis, causing over seven million premature deaths each year. AI can help combat this by providing real-time air quality warnings and offering insights for policy-making. It analyses data from monitors to send alerts when pollution spikes, helping people make safer choices like wearing masks or staying indoors.

Predictive AI models also aid scientists in forecasting pollutant levels. Engineers at Cornell, for example, developed a model that estimates particulate matter, helping prevent future health risks.

04

HUAWEI

WATCH NOW

Driving sustainable agriculture and biodiversity with technology

BIODIVERSITY MONITORING

PROMINENT COMPANY:
HUAWEI

AI is a powerful tool for improving biodiversity conservation and monitoring. Technologies such as neural networks and satellite imaging help researchers identify animals in photos, track populations, and observe species. This information enables conservationists to conduct habitat analyses, monitor species health and assess climate change's effects on wildlife.

Wildbook, for example, uses computer vision algorithms to identify and count animals, supporting more accurate wildlife population estimates. Such tools enhance biodiversity management efforts by providing timely, detailed data.

03

PREPAREDNESS FOR NATURAL DISASTERS

PROMINENT COMPANY:
NTT

AI has great potential to reduce the impact of extreme weather, which is increasing due to climate change. Floods already affect 250 million people yearly, but AI-enabled systems can help by delivering early warnings that can save lives and prevent economic losses. For instance, Google Research uses AI to predict floods up to seven days in advance in over 80 countries, even in data-poor regions.

Similarly, AI assists in detecting forest fires early. Cameras and sensors on drones and satellites monitor forests for signs like unusual heat or smoke. Dryad Networks, for example, uses ‘electronic noses’ to detect gases at the earliest fire stages.

NTT

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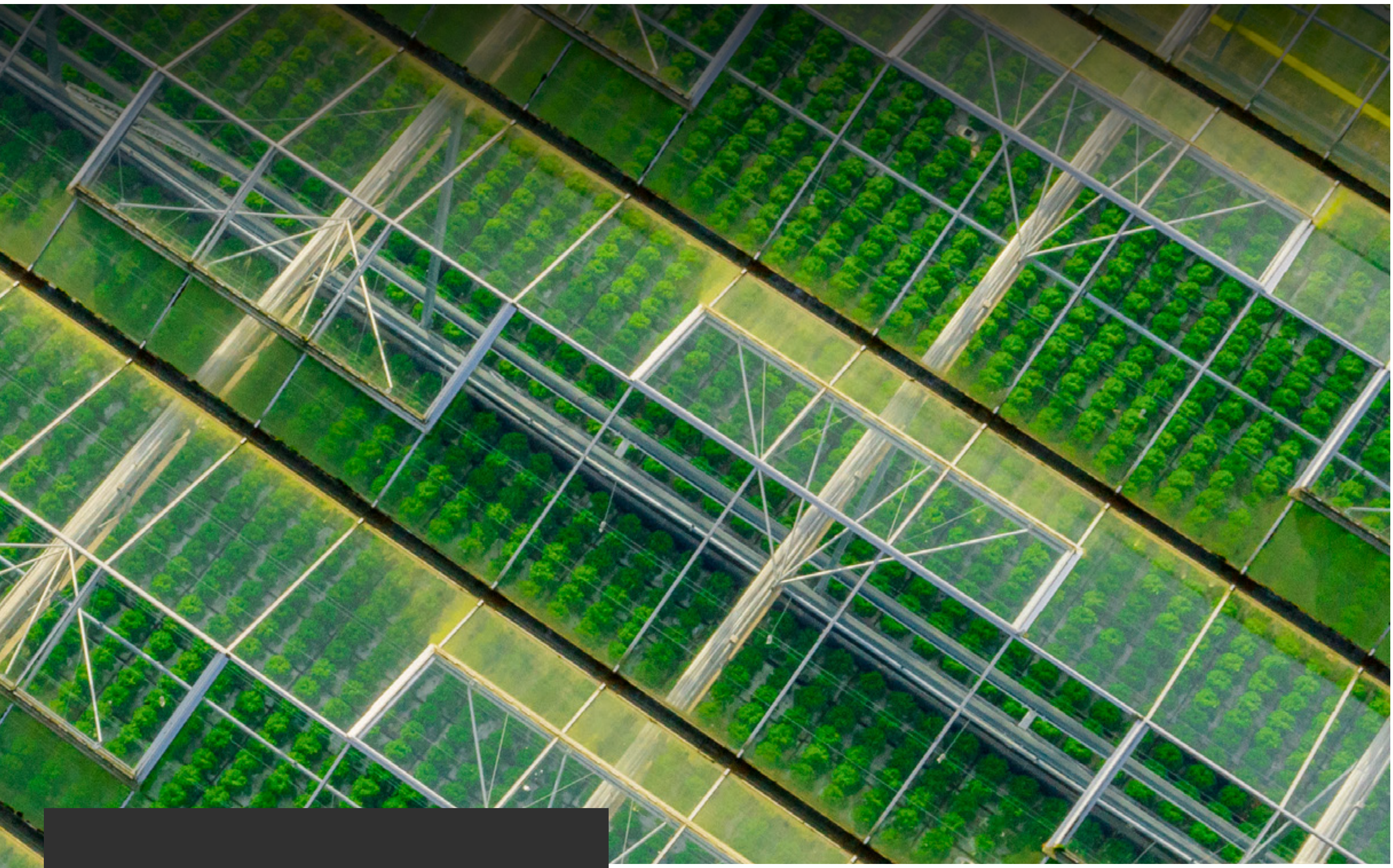

02

PEPSICO

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Discover how PepsiCo reinvents best farming practices

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

PROMINENT COMPANY:

PEPSICO

As the global demand for food rises, innovation becomes essential to meet this demand sustainably. AI is helping agriculture advance in efficiency and reduce environmental impacts. For example, AI-driven robots can monitor fields, harvest crops when ready and reduce waste through precise timing. AI also forecasts weather, providing farmers insights on the best times for watering, planting and harvesting.

Land management benefits, too, as AI uses satellite images and data to assist in planning crop locations and ensuring regulatory compliance. Additionally, AI-powered sensors can monitor the health of crops and animals, detecting issues early so farmers can intervene with minimal chemicals or medicines.

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01

DATA ANALYSIS FOR SUSTAINABILITY

PROMINENT COMPANY:
AMAZON

To combat global warming, effective analysis of its impacts is essential. Large language models (LLMs) like GPTs contribute to a sustainable future by enabling data-driven insights. Through AI, businesses can capture, process, and analyse information on transport and electricity use, helping them calculate carbon footprints at lower costs. LLMs can also optimise supply chain analysis, providing insights into expenditures and operational efficiencies.

Detecting Scope 3 emissions is more challenging than identifying scopes 1 and 2. By analysing extensive public data like news articles, social media and industry reports, LLMs such as ChatGPT help businesses identify these complex, indirect emissions risks. ○

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Amazon fulfillment centre tour with AWS

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CORNERSTONE

Digital Transformation Agility

WRITTEN BY:
SEAN
ASHCROFT

PRODUCED BY:
TOM
VENTURO

Cornerstone's Chief Digital and Information Officer, *Deepika Rayala,* shares its accelerated transformation journey

Cornerstone: Driving Workforce Agility through Innovation

Cornerstone, founded in 1999, began with a bold vision to democratise education through online learning. Over the years, Cornerstone has continuously innovated to become a leading cloud-based workforce agility platform.

Today, it empowers organisations worldwide to identify and address skills gaps, cultivate development opportunities, retain top talent, and deliver multi-modal learning experiences tailored to the evolving needs of the modern workforce.

With a thriving global community, Cornerstone supports more than 7,000 customers and 125 million users in 180 countries. Every three seconds a course is taken on the Cornerstone platform somewhere around the world. Its solutions are offered in more than 50 languages, underscoring a commitment to accessibility and inclusivity.

Cornerstone prides itself on a diverse team of 4,000 talent experts – affectionately known as Cornerstars – who bring passion and expertise to every customer and meet them where they are on their journey.

Innovative solutions and strategic growth

Cornerstone's transformative journey has been marked by strategic acquisitions

Deepika Rayala
Chief Digital and
Information Officer,
Cornerstone

DEEPIKA RAYALA

TITLE: **CHIEF DIGITAL AND INFORMATION OFFICER**

LOCATION: **UNITED STATES**

Deepika Rayala is the Chief Digital and Information Officer at Cornerstone where she is responsible for leading all aspects of Cornerstone's global IT footprint. Deepika leverages her extensive technology background and business acumen to deliver innovative IT solutions that optimise operational processes, create efficiencies and improve the user experience.

A seasoned IT leader, Deepika brings more than two decades of experience building and scaling IT organisations and leading large-scale business transformations. Her expertise spans across industries and geographies with consistent success in areas such as enterprise applications, data management and analytics, PMO, IT Operations, Security and Compliance and Offshore management.

> **“Every 3 seconds, there’s someone taking a Cornerstone learning course somewhere in the world”**
>
> **DEEPIKA RAYALA**
> CHIEF DIGITAL AND
> INFORMATION OFFICER,
> CORNERSTONE

of industry leaders, each adding unique strengths to their platform. The acquisition of Saba Software (Cornerstone Saba) enhanced its capabilities in performance management, learning management, and succession planning.

SumTotal (Cornerstone SumTotal) expanded their offerings in learning and talent management, while EdCast (Cornerstone Guide) bolstered their digital learning capabilities, enabling personalised learning journeys and fostering social learning.

Talespin (Cornerstone Immerse) introduced cutting-edge virtual and augmented reality training solutions, revolutionising their approach to immersive learning. The most recent acquisition of SkyHive has also helped integrate advanced skills management capabilities and social learning, significantly enhancing peer-to-peer learning and knowledge sharing, thanks to its daily intake of terabytes of global workforce benchmark data.

Deloitte.

Seeing the Value of Change in Digital Transformation

Deloitte's Sid Pinnamaneni explains why demonstrating a business case and managing change was pivotal in delivering transformation for Cornerstone OnDemand

In the competitive world of software, technology not only enables the business; it is the business.

Yet implementing technology innovation can prove tricky even for a cloud-based learning and human capital management provider like Cornerstone OnDemand. According to consultancy Deloitte, 70% of transformation efforts fail.* Part of the challenge is that technology implementations often have far-reaching impacts on people and processes. If proactively managed, these impacts can be beneficial; if not, they can lead to unintended consequences and unrealised value.

Deloitte’s work with Cornerstone shows how close communication and advanced planning are critical to success. Deloitte’s strategic alliances with Salesforce and Oracle also play a key role in transforming Cornerstone’s business operations.

“As new leadership for Cornerstone came in, they saw an opportunity to simplify their business processes,” explains Sid Pinnamaneni, managing director for the Cornerstone account at Deloitte Consulting LLP.

His work with Cornerstone began with establishing a business case before starting the end-to-end transformation journey.

“It’s important to identify the value creation levers, whether they are revenue growth opportunities, international expansion or cost reduction opportunities, and set the vision and objectives of the programme appropriately,” explains Sid.

Central to the success of this initiative was Deloitte's emphasis on change management, which involved seizing an unusual opportunity to leverage Cornerstone’s own MyGuide product.

“MyGuide was very effective and created an immersive training experience that made a big impact on adopting the many changes," says Sid.

"Plus, leadership gave us the liberty to challenge the status quo and enable industry-leading business practices, which was music to our ears.” This autonomy allowed Deloitte to tap into its vast knowledge of leading practices in the software sector.

As organisations continue to navigate the complexities of digital innovation, the Deloitte-Cornerstone collaboration illustrates the power of articulating business goals and proactively managing change in driving true business transformation.

Learn more about Deloitte and Oracle solutions

---

*Deloitte, Digital Transformation: Are people still our greatest asset?, 2020.
https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/uk/Documents/about-deloitte/deloitte-uk-digital-transformation-are-people-still-our-greatest-asset.pdf#:~:text=70%25%20of%20transformation%20efforts%20fail%20and%20it%20takes,failures%20is%20not%20the%20technology%2C%20it%E2%80%99s%20the%20people.

These acquisitions enhance the power of "Cornerstone Galaxy" to be the complete workforce agility platform for building and transforming high-performing and future-ready organisations. As Cornerstone CEO, Himanshu Palsule, rightly says, organisations are their best when their people are at their best.

The NorthStar Programme: A Testament to Transformation

Equipping sales teams with the right tools to engage digitally and capitalise on new offerings in a swift manner was crucial, but fragmented processes and systems impeded customer experience and revenue growth. In response to this challenge, Cornerstone launched the NorthStar programme.

Deepika Rayala, Chief Digital and Information Officer, led this initiative, in close collaboration with key industry and technology leaders, which aimed to unify Cornerstone's core internal systems landscape. Integrating these acquisitions into the existing ecosystem was not simply a matter of 'lift and shift', but rather a substantial digital transformation initiative.

140mn
users

180
countries

7,000+
customers

50
languages

More so, considering that the first three integrations were executed in a year – much faster than the industry average. Each entity brought its own systems, processes, organisational structures, analytics, and most importantly ways of working. One of them was a public carve-out integration. Harmonising these into a standardised set of processes was key to enabling a single business vernacular for the whole company.

Reflecting on the journey, Deepika says: “The challenging aspects of the transformation were also the most rewarding.”

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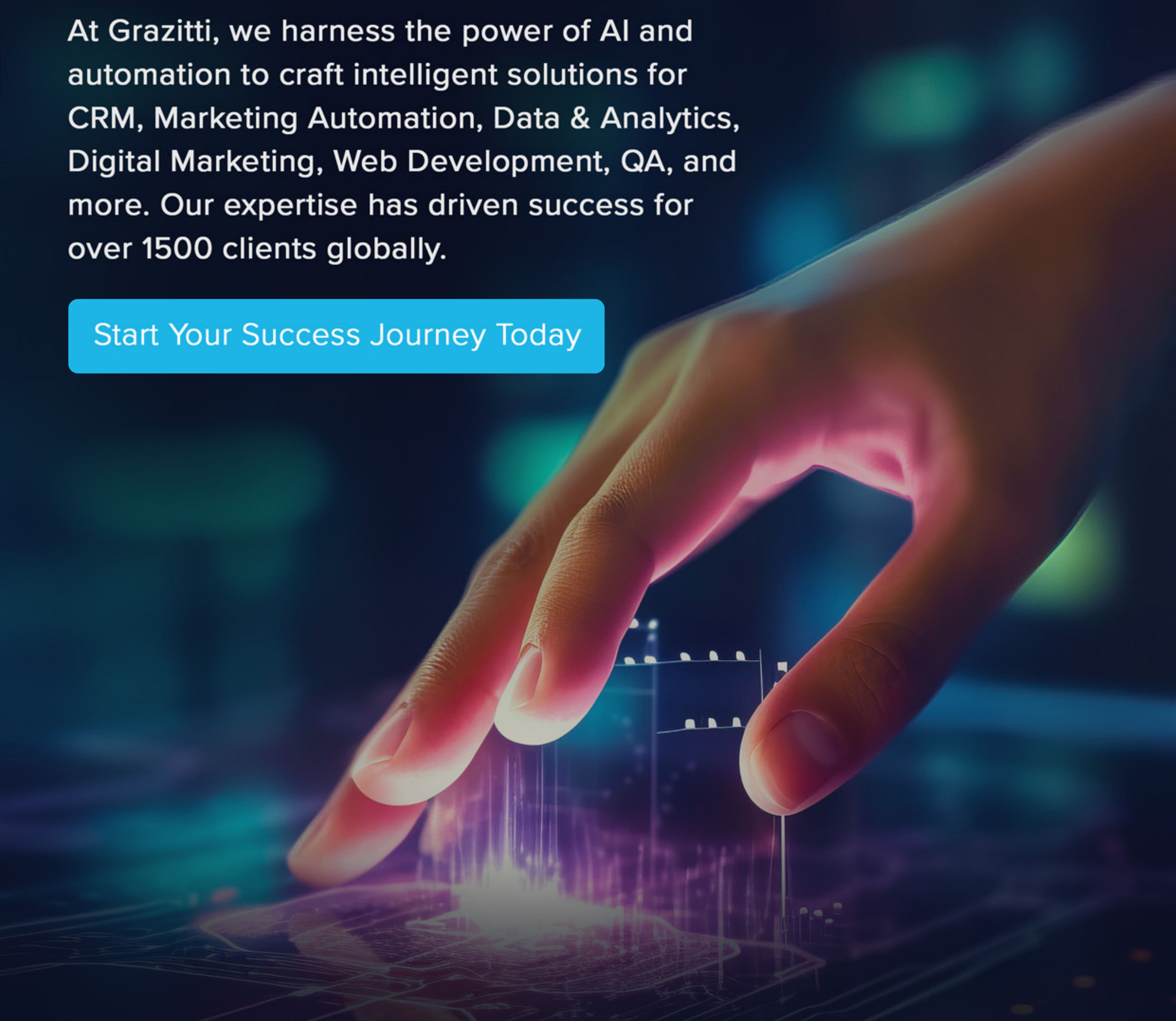

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> **“Digitising and automating our workflows will enable us to focus on significant value-added activities”**
>
> **DEEPIKA RAYALA**
> CHIEF DIGITAL AND
> INFORMATION OFFICER,
> CORNERSTONE

Cornerstone had to redesign and build a singular platform to ensure their go-to-market teams executed in a consistent and effective manner resulting in simplicity and velocity for their end-customers. This meant creating a new system with all the connective tissue required for frictionless execution and one set of master data and transactional flows including the re-engineering of 78 end-to-end business processes.

The programme integrated six distinct entities into a single platform in a phased manner, significantly reducing a decade’s worth of technological debt and resulting in improved transaction flows, better customer analytics, and enhanced operational efficiency. Additionally, manual activities such as order-form validation are now being automated using AI and related digital tools, to further improve operational efficiencies.

Deepika notes: “Our vision to further digitise and automate our business

cornerstone

workflows will enable us to focus on value-added activities that make a significant impact. Every hour our users don't spend in the system is an hour they can dedicate to driving the business forward."

Cornerstone's Digital Adoption Journey: Drinking Their own Champagne

As any company undergoing a transformation knows, bringing your people along on the journey and helping them embrace change can be difficult. The new system brought complexities around deal processing, data integration, and workflow automation. Users were used to a set of steps that they followed in the legacy systems for 10-15 years.

As Deepika explains: "One of the other key aspects of the program was ensuring

that a large, globally dispersed team could work in tandem and stay aligned with the execution rhythm under tight timelines.

"It called for the right balance of meeting cadences versus informational updates and making every programme team member feel included. There's no point in running at 100 miles an hour only to look back and discover there's no one behind you."

With different personas, tenure and competency levels, getting everyone on board with the new way of working was a significant milestone. In response to this challenge, Cornerstone leveraged its own Cornerstone Guide and Cornerstone Learn modules to accelerate adoption of the new system. The programme needed to ensure that the sales teams and customer support teams became proficient with the new NorthStar CRM system very quickly.

By utilising Cornerstone Guide, it decreased training time by facilitating training in the flow of work, increased application adoption, and lowered the demand on the supporting teams.

Cornerstone Guide provided in-app tours, how-to guides, assisted automations, courses, and cue-based instructions, enabling a personalised and connected learning experience for every situation in the flow of work.

In addition to Cornerstone Guide, it utilised Cornerstone Learn (Digital Learning Academy) to define specialised learning pathways and content tailored to each persona and with the desired learning outcomes. This enabled reporting on course completion rates,

Expand
Elevate Human Intelligence With The Power of AI
Learning Design
Narrative Design
Visual Asset Production
Blended Learning Experience Design Process
Moving E
Traditional Ti
Quality
TIME

understanding where gaps existed, and identifying areas for improvement in an easy self-service manner.

Strategic Alliances

The success of the NorthStar programme was also attributed to strategic collaboration with industry leaders such as Deloitte and Grazitti. Deloitte provided global leadership in designing and implementing the new systems including Salesforce and Oracle ERP solutions, while Grazitti's specialisation in Salesforce data migration complemented this by ensuring seamless integration and helping optimise overall costs. This collaboration allowed Cornerstone to manage the transformation effectively and execute an effective cutover and post-go-live support.

Results and Future-Ready Workforce

The detailed planning and user-centric approach of the NorthStar programme

pand
Beyond
me → Cost
Triangle
RELEVANCE
PRIORITY
EXPERIENCE
58%
25
18%
10%
Expand
The World's Leading Immersive Platform - Talespin

Cornerstone Immerse

enabled this large transition to go-live with less than a 1% variance in overall revenue between old and new systems on day one.

Today, Cornerstone operates under a single, standardised platform, paving the way for future growth and innovation. This transformation continues to evolve with a focus on enhancing operational efficiency, enabling faster reporting, and improving user experience for both internal and external customers.

Cornerstone's evolving digital journey is a testament to its strategic vision with unwavering commitment to take on challenges that become key differentiators, with a flair for resilience and a focus on meticulous execution. By leveraging innovative technologies and fostering a culture of continuous learning, Cornerstars are future-ready and poised to navigate the ever-changing landscape of work.

TEALIUM

Moving from Data Insights to Action in Seconds

In a data-driven world, Tealium's executive team explains how its solutions empowers enterprises to transform insights into action

WRITTEN BY: KRISTIAN MCCANN

CREDIT: TEALIUM

Jeff Lunsford, CEO,
Michael Anderson, CTO
and Ali Behnam, Co-founder,
Tealium

CREDIT: TEALIUM

TEALIUM

HEADQUARTERS: SAN DIEGO, US
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: 501-1K
MARKET CAP: NOT PUBLICLY TRADED
NUMBER OF COUNTRIES: 16 COUNTRIES

Supporting more than 1,300 built-in connections, Tealium is a company that connects customer data across web, mobile, offline and IoT so businesses can better connect with their customers.

Jeff Lunsford, CEO, Michael Anderson, CTO and Ali Behnam, Co-founder, Tealium

In a world where data is more valuable than oil, having a partner who can help you make the most out of that is invaluable.

It is here, Tealium, a software company led by a trio of seasoned leaders, has developed a solutions that not only gives you the data, but instant insights from it so you can take action.

With a combined experience of over 50 years in real-time analytics, CEO Jeff Lunsford, Co-founder Ali Behnam and CTO Michael Anderson have been instrumental in shaping the future of data utilisation and they give insights into what it has taken to build a company that now processes nine billion data points a day.

Q. WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THE EXECUTIVE TEAM AT TEALIUM?

» **Jeff:** I've been partners with Mike and Ali for 22 years, meeting on April 1, 2002, at WebSide Story. We're not a hierarchical organisation at Tealium, but rather a group of partners with distinct roles.

Q. WHAT ISSUES WAS TEALIUM CREATED TO SOLVE?

» **Ali:** We faced frustrations back in the WebSide Story days, where we would deploy solutions for customers, they would get the reports like, and say "Oh, this is really great data. Now, what do I do with it?" There was just no action tied to the analytics. So, our vision has always been to be this unified data layer for the enterprise.

Q. WHAT ARE THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES FACING ENTERPRISE DATA MANAGEMENT TODAY?

» **Jeff:** So we work with about 750 of the largest enterprises in the world in a variety of fields: finance, pharmaceuticals, insurance. Each and every one of these industries has some unique challenges, but the one common challenge is, they all need to collect data from across their customer experience systems.

Q. WHAT DOES TEALIUM BRING CLIENTS' DATA AND HOW HAS ITS APPROACH EVOLVED OVER THE YEARS?

» **Michael:** In order for a marketing team to do what they needed to do, they needed to understand their customers a bit better. When we built the first customer data platform back in 2013, we had an immediate uptick with customers very interested in this future of understanding their data.

The analytics vendors, Google analytics, omniture or Adobe Analytics, all had vendor specific data layers that they required you to tag. We therefore put that data back into their hands so that they can understand it and we feel that it solves a lot of the downstream problems of the company doing so. We've taken tag management and used it to get right into the creation of data.

Q. WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THESE REAL TIME DATA EVENTS TEALIUM PROVIDES FOR CUSTOMERS?

» **Michael:** There's not a single ETL process that happens in our platform. It always goes into the systems that it's going into. So instead of dragging the whole user profile, we are able to instead

2008

Tealium founded by Mike Anderson and Ali Behnam

2012

Tealium's first product, iQ Tag Management launches, followed by the Multi-CDN network

2013

Tealium launches the first ever Customer Data platform, AudienceStream

analyse a specific set of hints around who that visitor is so that we can react to that visit with personalised content or adverts or products in below 50 milliseconds.

Q. HOW DO YOUR TAG MANAGEMENT, API HUB AND CUSTOMER DATA PLATFORM AND DATA MANAGEMENT WORK TOGETHER TO CREATE VALUE FOR YOUR CLIENTS?

» **Jeff:** We really think of it as one continuous data supply chain. So the tag management is just the web data layers. We're collecting web data.

The server side data collection is collecting from everything that has an API, which integrates with 1,300 vendors across this ecosystem, like Mobile and IoT and kiosk and branch and store.

Then the customer data platform takes all that turns that into humanised data and then allows you to label that data in your own business language with badges and metrics and lists of things people might have looked at or bought and that also gives you the activation capability out the back end of the data supply chain into the customer experience systems.

Then the data management piece is where we store all that data and synchronise it with their back end data warehouse like they may be using Snowflake or Databricks, or AWS, or Azure.

Q. WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT TEALIUM PREDICT?

» **Jeff:** Tealium Predict is something that helps you do propensity scoring.

For instance, this customer may have a propensity to abandon their shopping cart. If they do, then you might want to interact with them along their journey and try to incentivise them, not to abandon that shopping cart and so

2016

EventStream & DataAccess are added to Tealium's product offerings

2020

Tealium becomes a remote first company in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Later in the year, Tealium Predict is launched

2022

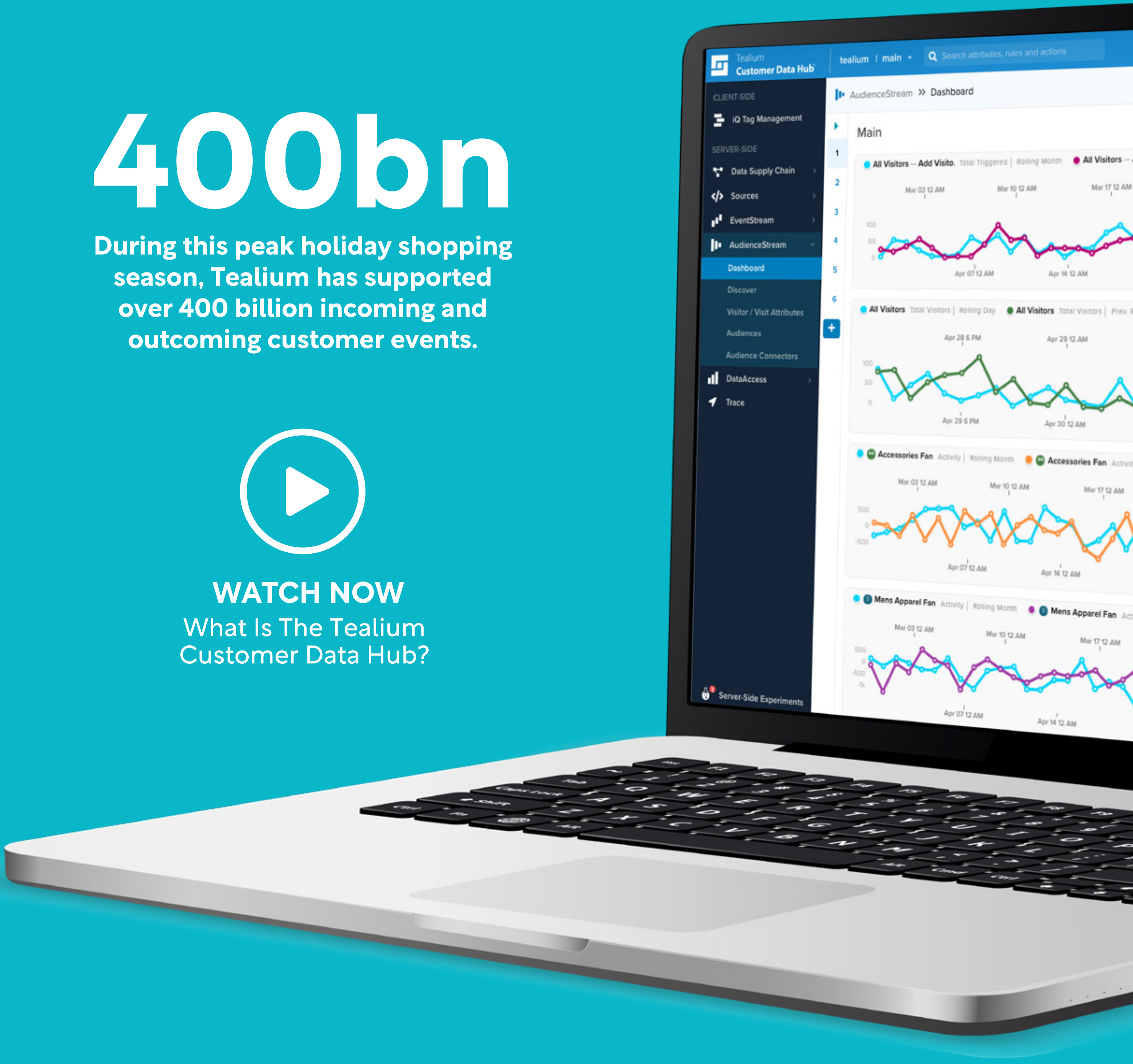
Tealium processes over 9 billion events on a typical day and launches Mosaic and LIFT University

400bn

During this peak holiday shopping season, Tealium has supported over 400 billion incoming and outcoming customer events.

WATCH NOW

What Is The Tealium Customer Data Hub?


Tealium Customer Data Hub
tealium | main
Search attributes, rules and actions
AudienceStream » Dashboard
CLIENT-SIDE
iQ Tag Management
SERVER-SIDE
Data Supply Chain
Sources
EventStream
AudienceStream
Dashboard
Discover
Visitor / Visit Attributes
Audiences
Audience Connectors
DataAccess
Trace
Server-Side Experiments
Main
All Visitors – Add Visito.
All Visitors
Accessories Fan
Mens Apparel Fan

CREDIT: TEALIUM

Save/Publish
ND
Badge activity
90 Day
Removed
Assigned
Audience activity
All Time
Left
Joined
most recent data

Tealium processes over 9 billion events on a typical day

> “WE WORK WITH ABOUT 750 OF THE LARGEST ENTERPRISES IN THE WORLD IN A VARIETY OF FIELDS: FINANCE, PHARMACEUTICALS, INSURANCE”

JEFF LUNSFORD,
CEO,
TEALIUM

we have customers who have used to and predict for all sorts of various use cases, and it will be where we run AI on Tealium's platform and give our customers the ability to run models on their data within our platform.

Q. WHAT WILL TEALIUM’S BIGGEST FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES BE?

» **Jeff:** The advancement of AI is going to fuel the ascent of AI agents. Also, conversational AI is going to be the next major interface that gets layered on top of Web mobile to determine sentiment and enhance an experience based on that.

Mike: In a world of abundant choice, the few things that will separate competitors from each other are user experience and the best experiences are driven by the best data. So for us, that’s the focus, a tech initiative. ○

MUNTERS:
FOCUS ON CUSTO
PEOPLE & SUSTAIN

AD FEATURE

WRITTEN BY:
CHARLIE
KING

PRODUCED BY:
LEWIS
VAUGHAN

MER SUCCESS, ABILITY

Craig MacFadyen of Munters explores how a customer-centric and people-led strategy is crafting the future of data centres to be more sustainable

Data centres have become the invisible backbone of modern society, powering nearly every aspect of our digital lives. These facilities house vast networks of servers and equipment that enable essential services – emergency services, supply chain management, government operations, online banking, healthcare systems, e-commerce, social media and much more.

They enable remote work, online education and digital entertainment, as well as playing a crucial role in advancing technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning and big data analytics, driving innovation across industries.

Craig MacFadyen, the Director of Offer Strategy and Portfolio Management at Munters, has nearly 30 years of experience in HVAC and has worked in data centres since 2015.

Whilst studying to be an electrical engineer, his career began somewhat unexpectedly in the HVAC sector, leading to a long tenure at Fläkt Woods AB before joining Munters.

> **“I BELIEVE THE DATA CENTRE INDUSTRY HAS SUSTAINABILITY FAR MORE IN ITS FORETHOUGHT THAN ANY OTHER INDUSTRY ON THE PLANET”**
>
> **CRAIG MACFADYEN**
> DIRECTOR OF OFFER STRATEGY AND PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT, MUNTERS

Development of the sector over the past 15 years

Data centres date back to the 1940s, although the technology of 80 years ago is barely comparable to today’s machines.

“When I started in the sector nine years ago a two megawatt hall was very large – and unusual – and now we have 90 to 300 megawatt campuses,” shares Craig, reflecting on the development of data centres.

“The numbers are just unbelievable, and way beyond what we expected,” he says.

“The growth of the data centre industry has been abnormal compared to other industries. But of course we’re grasping it and going for it – it is an amazing place and I feel very lucky to be in it.”

Meet Munters

Headquartered in Sweden, Munters operates within three different business areas:

- AirTech, which provides energy-efficient air treatment for industrial applications through climate solutions, components and services for processes that require precise control of humidity and temperature.
- Data Centre Technologies, which creates advanced sustainable climate solutions for cooling data centres.
- FoodTech, which focuses on energy-efficient climate systems for livestock farming and greenhouses, as well as optimisation software for the food production value chain.

“Our mission is for customer success and a healthier planet. We provide sustainable solutions to create an optimal climate for a process, whether that process is a data centre, a battery technology manufacturing facility, clean rooms, food storage freezers or people,” Craig explains.

As part of the strategy and portfolio management team, Craig links the sales and the research and development teams. Within his role, he collates the information he gets from customers, clients, trade shows, webinars and the media to ensure that Munters is collaborating within its different departments to create an aligned strategy and operate at the pinnacle of the sector.

CRAIG MACFADYEN

TITLE: **DIRECTOR OF OFFER STRATEGY AND PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT**

Craig MacFadyen, the Director of Offer Strategy and Portfolio Management at Munters Data Centre Technologies, has over 30 years of experience in HVAC and has worked in data centres since 2015. Whilst studying to be an electrical engineer, his career began somewhat unexpectedly in the HVAC sector, leading to a long tenure at Fläkt Woods AB before joining Munters.

In his current role, Craig is part of a team shaping Munters' strategic direction and product offerings in the rapidly evolving data centre cooling industry. Today, Munters has a comprehensive portfolio of cooling solutions that cater to the diverse needs of data centre operators worldwide.

"IT'S ALL ABOUT GROWTH"

CRAIG MACFADYEN
DIRECTOR OF OFFER STRATEGY
AND PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT,
MUNTERS

"We can bring products to market in under a year now, whereas normally it would be two or three years," Craig says. "That is possible because we deal with the customer during that development – they're part of the R&D process. We think we're unique in the way it works, but it also seems very successful."

Craig strongly believes that collaboration is an asset to the data centre industry, a belief that is reflected in Munters' processes.

Staying ahead of the competition

The collaborative approach helps Munters to perform at the peak of the sector.

"We listen to everything," says Craig. "Through dealing with the people who are operating these data centres on a day-to-day basis we get real insight to learn from.

It's important to make sure that we're listening, not just hearing, so that we can understand what the actual requirements are in the halls and then design something at a fast enough pace to keep up with market demand."

The challenge arising here is the unprecedented speed at which the market is developing.

"We're seeing a bit of hesitation going on because no one's got a great deal of experience on this change to liquid cooling," Craig shares. "Most people are having to second guess what they need. But when you listen to the people who are actually operating and running the data centres, you get a good feeling of what's really required. From there you just hope that innovation keeps you ahead of the curve."

Prioritising people and partnerships

The data centre side of Munters' business sits in the middle of the company's three sectors in terms of size, but is the fastest growing.

Munters' new 11,500m² production site in Cork, Ireland – LEED Silver certified with an A Building Energy Rating

In comparison with its competitors, Munters works slightly differently. "We have a strategy and portfolio management department, in which our role is to offer a link between the market, sales and R&D," Craig shares.

This includes being on top of micro and macros trends, partly through the strong connection with the company's customers.

"We are very proud of the way we go to market, and we are very proud of the people that work for us because I think it's the people that differentiate us. Of course we've got some differentiated products and solutions, but actually it's the people and the way we apply our experience that sets Munters apart from competitors."

Craig highlights three key benefits to the Munters strategy of prioritising people:

- Technical – working with design teams to provide the most suitable solution taking into account customer feedback means that the final system will be the best it can be for day-to -day operations.

- Business – happy customers and good sales ensure that Munters is staying at the forefront of the industry.

WATCH NOW

Meet Craig MacFadyen
Director of Offer
Strategy and Portfolio
Management Business
Area Data Center
Technologies at Munters

- Customer – consistent customer satisfaction means that not only will they be returning customers, but also that they will contribute to the conversation and ensure that further innovation is successful.

Increasing focus on sustainability

Craig sees two parts to Munters' sustainability – the company itself and the industry heritage.

Munters has a strong history of prioritising efficiency and sustainability – "that's always been the way we are," Craig remarks. "Historically, we've kind of been a niche player in the data centre market because we've been predominantly doing direct evaporative cooling or indirective evaporativ cooling for more than 20 years. Using that evaporative media has been one of our strengths – we didn't have traditional heat rejection products in our portfolio."

As attention turns to the high water usage of these systems, they are being used less – so Munters is innovating.

"Sustainability and energy efficiency go hand in hand," Craig says. "We've always been very good on the efficiency side. We've always had very low energy using products."

"We are in a fantastic industry with regards to sustainability," Craig says of the other aspect, industry heritage. "I believe we have sustainability far more in our forethought than any other industry on the planet.

"We're driven by the hyperscalers leading the way by striving for 100% renewable energy use with targets to be net zero or carbon negative and they lead the way. As an industry we've all got that mindset."

Cutting corners is not an option for an industry that has so many eyes on its efficiency – but Munters is a company with a history of prioritising efficiency.

Managing increasing regulation

Data centre regulation is evolving rapidly, with sustainability and energy efficiency at the forefront of new legislation. As the industry grapples with increasing scrutiny, operators are finding themselves at the cutting edge of environmental practices, often outpacing other sectors in their efforts to reduce carbon footprints.

The European Union (EU) has been particularly active in this space, with Germany leading the charge by implementing stringent Power Usage Effectiveness (PUE) requirements for data centres. This push for efficiency is coupled with legislation mandating energy reuse, a move that has been widely welcomed within the sector. "In Germany, PUE levels for design have to be quite low, which is great for us," says Craig. "They're legislating that you have to have a certain percentage available for heat reuse – it's the right thing to do."

However, the implementation of such regulations is not without its challenges. "What needs to happen is probably better planning throughout all authorities and throughout all countries, so that they build facilities that can use the energy that data centres are producing," Craig explains.

One area of concern for the industry is the potential ban on certain refrigerants, particularly those with low Global Warming Potential (GWP). Craig has reservations about this approach, "I understand the mentality of it, but you have to balance the benefits of these low GWP refrigerants against the risks."

The debate around refrigerants highlights the complex balancing act regulators face. While aiming to reduce environmental impact, they must also consider the practicalities and safety implications of alternatives.

As the industry continues to navigate these regulatory waters, the overarching goal of carbon neutrality remains paramount. "I think what's going to affect most of us is carbon neutrality," Craig says. This focus on sustainability is likely to shape the future of data centre design and operation for years to come, with regulations serving as both a challenge and a catalyst for innovation in the sector.

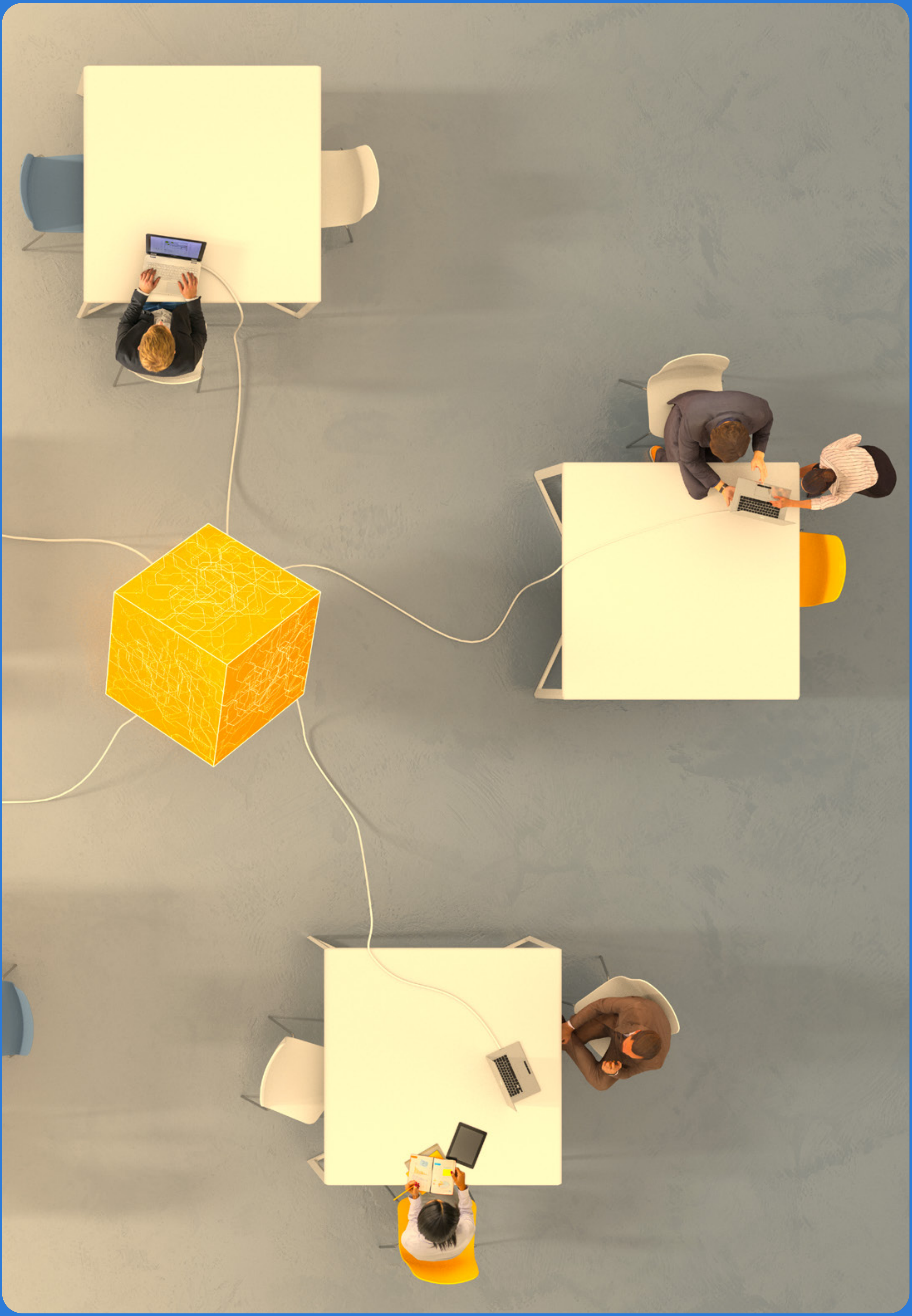
The future of data centres

Whilst Munters' data centre business is already on a growth trajectory, there are no signs of it stopping soon – or the wider industry growth.

"It's all about growth," Craig concludes. "We've built factories to increase our capacity in Munters and we just expect to fill those factories.

"We're in the data centre industry, which is an incredible industry for growth, and it's a wave that we're excited to ride." ○

Munters
DATA CENTRE TECHNOLOGIES



REVOLUTIONISING AI: THE POWER OF BLOCKCHAIN INTEGRATION

We explore how the synergy of AI and Blockchain is creating innovative solutions, enhancing security, transparency and accountability across industries

WRITTEN BY: KRISTIAN MCCANN

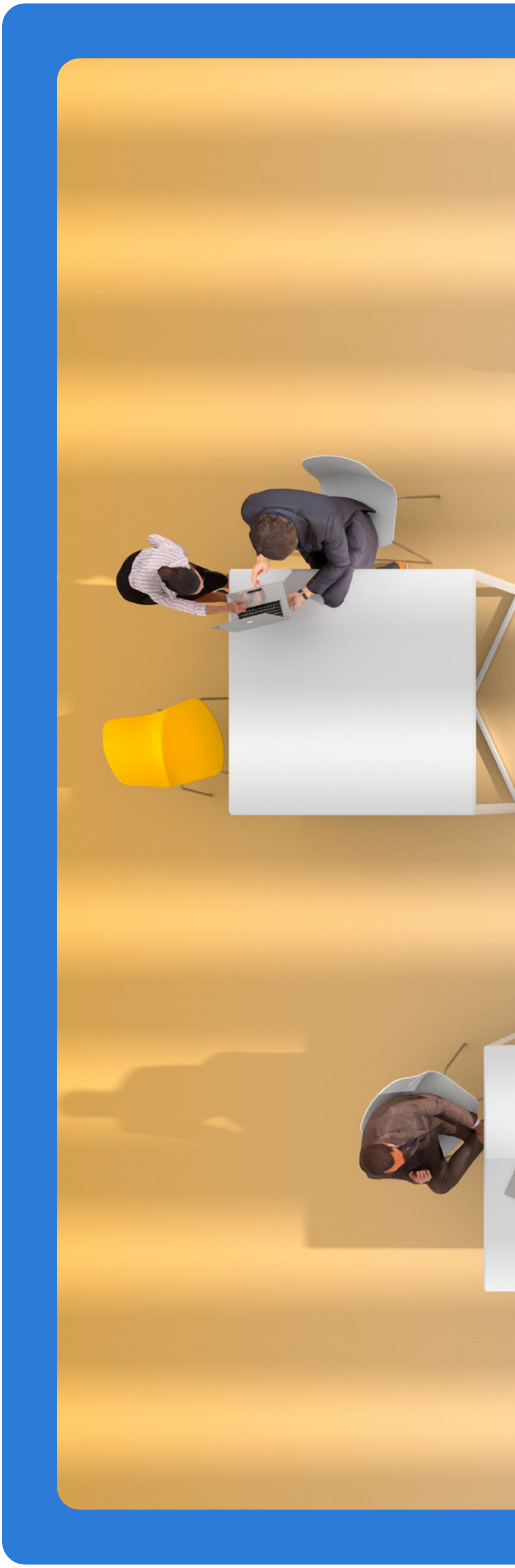
AI has rapidly emerged as one of the most transformative technologies of our time, capturing public attention and industry interest. With its ability to simulate human intelligence and revolutionise decision-making, AI has become a central focus for businesses and governments.

However, before AI became the defining technology of this era, another digital revolution had taken root: blockchain. Known for its decentralised and secure approach to data management, blockchain first gained prominence through cryptocurrencies, offering a tamper-proof ledger that could transform traditional financial systems.

As businesses and innovators have explored the potential of these two technologies separately, one question has emerged: What would happen if AI and Blockchain were combined?

“Blockchain and AI were a non-obvious match until recently and their combined usage was not widespread,” explains Scott Zoldi, Chief Analytics Officer at FICO.

The convergence of these technologies opens up new opportunities that neither could achieve alone. Blockchain’s robust security features provide an ideal environment for AI systems to operate with greater accountability and transparency, addressing many of the ethical concerns surrounding AI, such as biases in data, transparency of decision-making, and the need for traceable audit trails.



“The blockchain landscape in AI is evolving rapidly, driven by interest in data privacy, security and decentralised decision-making,” says Cristiano Ventricelli, VP of Digital Assets at Moody’s Ratings.

The integration of AI and Blockchain also creates exciting possibilities for new business models. One of the most promising applications is the creation of decentralised AI marketplaces.

This would democratise access to AI, enabling smaller companies and individual developers to participate in the AI ecosystem in ways that were previously inaccessible.

Together, AI and Blockchain do more than just amplify each other’s strengths; they also tackle some of each other’s biggest challenges. Blockchain, with its decentralised approach, addresses data privacy concerns and transparency needs, while AI’s analytical power enhances the functionality and applicability of Blockchain. This powerful combination, though still in its early stages, stands to reshape industries by enabling safer, more transparent, and more accountable AI systems. We take a look at the technical dynamics of how that could happen.

The role of blockchain in enhancing AI systems

Scott Zoldi, Chief Analytics Officer at FICO, explains the transformative role of blockchain in enhancing AI systems. He notes that “the immutable nature

THE CONVERGENCE REVOLUTION: WHERE AI MEETS BLOCKCHAIN

What’s Driving the Change?
The fusion of AI and blockchain technology represents more than just a technical merger – it’s reshaping how we think about digital trust and automation. While AI brings powerful analytical capabilities and decision-making prowess, blockchain adds the crucial elements of transparency and immutability that the AI sector has been searching for.

Key Applications

- **Data Privacy & Security:** Blockchain’s immutable ledger system provides a secure foundation for AI operations, ensuring that sensitive data remains protected while maintaining transparency in how it’s used.

- **Decentralised AI Marketplaces:** A new ecosystem is emerging where smaller companies and individual developers can participate in the AI economy, democratizing access to advanced technology that was previously limited to tech giants.

- **AI Governance & Compliance:** The combination creates verifiable audit trails for AI decisions, crucial for industries where accountability and regulatory compliance are paramount.

“Blockchain and AI were a non-obvious match until recently and their combined usage was not widespread”

SCOTT ZOLDI,
CHIEF ANALYTICS OFFICER,
FICO

SCOTT ZOLDI

TITLE: **CHIEF ANALYTICS OFFICER**

COMPANY: **FICO**

INDUSTRY: **DATA ANALYTICS**

As Chief Analytics Officer at FICO, Scott leads a global team of world-class data scientists while pursuing his passion for AI. Having authored his first AI software patent in 2000, he remains grounded in his academic background in theoretical and computational physics.

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AI EVERYTHING SUMMIT
ABU DHABI

5 - 6 FEB 2025
EXHIBITION SHOWCASE
DUBAI

POWERING GLOBAL COLLABORATIONS
IN THE NEW AI ECONOMY

15,000+	500+	150+	60+	200+
VISITORS	EXHIBITORS	INVESTORS	COUNTRIES	SPEAKERS

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of blockchain allows key critical AI model development details to be stored immutably for governance and regulatory proof." This feature is crucial for ensuring compliance with responsible AI standards, as it enables the storage of essential information related to AI model requirements, success criteria, and ethical testing.

He also highlights that blockchain serves as a "safety device for AI applications," reestablishing trust in automated systems. By providing a transparent audit trail, blockchain facilitates the monitoring of AI models in production, thereby ensuring they adhere to responsible usage guidelines. Scott explains the importance of training data scientists to view blockchain as integral to AI operationalisation, stating that "most AI developers are not blockchain experts" and need guidance on merging these technologies effectively.

Looking ahead, Scott envisions blockchain's role expanding beyond model governance to encompass entire decision-making platforms. He asserts that organisations should "view blockchain as part of their ability to audit the AI models," ensuring ethical and safe use of AI systems. This integration will be vital for fostering accountability and transparency in increasingly autonomous AI applications.

How blockchain and AI can enhance data privacy

Cristiano Ventricelli, VP of Digital Assets at Moody's Ratings, outlines the

CRISTIANO VENTRICELLI

TITLE: **VP OF DIGITAL ASSETS**

COMPANY: **MOODY'S RATINGS**

INDUSTRY: **FINANCIAL SERVICES**

Cristiano has over 10 years of experience in financial services, with a strong academic foundation in quantitative finance. As part of Moody's Ratings Digital Economy team, he focuses on the intersection of traditional financial institutions and emerging technologies and markets.

> **“The blockchain landscape in AI is evolving rapidly, driven by interest in data privacy, security, and decentralised decision-making”**
>
> **CRISTIANO VENTRICELLII,**
> VP OF DIGITAL ASSETS,
> MOODY'S RATINGS

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Why AI, Blockchain, and Hyper Automation are the Future of Finance

evolving integration of blockchain and AI, highlighting its potential to enhance data privacy, security and decentralised decision-making.

He observes that “the blockchain landscape in AI is evolving rapidly,” driven by a need for secure data management. Blockchain provides a “verifiable, immutable data trail,” which is essential for compliance with privacy regulations and establishes trust in data sourcing.

Cristiano identifies three primary areas where blockchain is being utilised in AI: data security and privacy, decentralised AI marketplaces and AI governance. He explains that blockchain can safeguard sensitive data, allowing for a more transparent and secure sharing process.

Furthermore, he notes the emergence of "decentralised marketplaces for AI models," enabling developers to access and monetise AI assets without intermediaries, thus fostering a more democratised AI landscape.

Looking ahead, Cristiano anticipates significant shifts driven by data privacy demands, interoperability advancements, and regulatory clarity. He asserts that the future may see blockchain acting as a foundational layer for "decentralised, community-governed AI ecosystems," enhancing transparency and accountability in various sectors such as healthcare and finance. This integration could ultimately lead to more ethical and resilient AI systems.

NAVIGATING GCC PROCUREMENT
THE FUTURE OF GOVERNMENT STRATEGY

WRITTEN BY:
LIBBY
HARGREAVES

PRODUCED BY:
STUART
IRVING

Waleed Al Saeedi, Director of Capital Projects at the Department of Culture and Tourism, explores the evolving procurement landscape in the GCC

In 2013, Waleed Al Saeedi joined Abu Dhabi's Department of Culture and Tourism (DCT) as Director of Capital Projects, transforming procurement processes by slashing tender cycle times by 80%. Al Saeedi was later seconded to the Government Procurement Office, where he introduced new frameworks for procurement and, in 2022, continued refining strategies with the implementation of master service agreements at a confidential government entity.

A legacy of growth and transformation

Al Saeedi began his career at Ruwais Fertilizer Industries (FERTIL) in 1997 after earning a Civil Engineering degree from UAE University. He also later completed an MBA from Abu Dhabi University, but his procurement optimisation talents were evident early on as he swiftly rose through the ranks to manage 80% of FERTIL's commercial spend.

Between 2010 and 2013, a key chapter of Al Saeedi's career unfolded as he established and led a procurement function in a niche, heavily-regulated industry. This role proved transformative, offering a platform to demonstrate his knack for navigating high-stakes environments with precision and strategic insight.

Waleed Al Saeedi,
Director of Capital
Projects,
Abu Dhabi's Department
of Culture and Tourism

Waleed Al Saeedi,
Director of Capital Projects,
Abu Dhabi's Department of Culture and Tourism

The position demanded mastery over core procurement processes, from contract negotiation and supplier relationship management to strategy development and meticulous budgeting. Collaboration with global suppliers provided valuable international experience, sharpening his understanding of diverse procurement systems and exposing the power of strong strategic partnerships.

One of Al Saeedi's proudest accomplishments was fostering team development, prioritising training that saw many team members earning CIPS certification for the first time. This achievement elevated the team's professional standards and cemented a legacy of transformative leadership.

"I transformed the procurement team into a best-in-class operation by implementing streamlined policies and procedures that reduced lead times, optimised procurement costs and introduced effective spend categorisation," he proudly explains. "These advancements weren't just operational improvements; they were strategic shifts that elevated the department's role within the organisation."

Driving Abu Dhabi's digital revolution

Every new journey Al Saeedi embarks on is characterised by the encompassing of digital procurement transformation.

"To me, digital transformation in this field represents more than just implementing new systems – it's a fundamental shift in how procurement can drive value, enhance transparency and create resilience in the supply chain," he asserts.

50+

Number of government entities whose digital procurement Al Saeedi oversees through the Government Digital Procurement Platform

Al Saeedi has seen this firsthand, from implementing a new ERP system back in 1998 to the implementation of a Government Digital Procurement Platform – an initiative which aimed to standardise procurement across more than 50 public entities.

He continues: "I've since witnessed how each step forward in technology has helped procurement move from a purely transactional role to a strategic one. Today, digital transformation is crucial for the industry's future."

Through the project, Al Saeedi homogenised procurement best practices such as category management and supplier performance tracking in order to promote a more strategic sourcing approach and strengthen local supplier relationships.

His current focus lies in elevating digital services and systems across Abu Dhabi's government through cutting-edge

> “I firmly believe that digital transformation is not a one-time effort but an ongoing journey”
>
> **WALEED AL SAEEDI**
> DIRECTOR OF CAPITAL PROJECTS,
> DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE
> AND TOURISM

Common Digital Platforms. The increased efficiency, transparency and value he hopes to gain from the project is the reason he also encourages others to embrace digitisation.

“New technologies can enhance efficiency and transparency, but they require significant investment and training,” Al Saeedi stresses. “Procurement professionals should champion the integration of these technologies to streamline workflows, enhance data accuracy and provide real-time insights into procurement activities.

“I firmly believe that digital transformation is not a one-time effort but an ongoing journey.”

Resilience and adaptability shape procurement strategies

Procurement plays a vital role in shaping the future of government operations and resilience is at the heart of effective strategy. For the DCT, procurement revolves around strategic sourcing and bulk purchasing to manage costs and maintain high standards.

Technology, like e-procurement systems, streamlines these efforts, ensuring efficiency and compliance with regulatory and ethical frameworks.

As highlighted by Al Saeedi, resilience requires adaptability.

He explains: “To build resilience and adapt to future uncertainties, governments must develop a holistic approach that ensures procurement activities remain effective, sustainable and adaptable, even in challenging economic climates.”

Strategic partnerships also form the backbone of DCT's approach. Establishing long-term contracts with suppliers stabilises pricing and availability, mitigating risks during market fluctuations.

"In previous roles, I have seen the value of these partnerships firsthand; they provide reliability when it's needed most," Al Saeedi adds.

Collaborative procurement as a catalyst for change

Procurement at Abu Dhabi is entering a new phase, with innovation at its core. Collaborative procurement involves working closely with suppliers, sharing insights and co-developing solutions to stay ahead of trends. This flexibility allows procurement models to adapt to the unique demands of the cultural and tourism sectors in Abu Dhabi.

"Innovation is driving future procurement strategies," Al Saeedi emphasises. "Governments must foster an environment where procurement professionals are encouraged to explore new methods, such as collaborative procurement."

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As the global leader in wearable augmented reality (AR) experiences for cultural and heritage tourism, ARtGlass uses advanced AR glasses to blend immersive visuals with real-world environments, creating unforgettable experiences that bring history to life.

Where Innovation Meets Cultural Heritage through Immersive AR

ARtGlass reshapes how people connect with history and culture by harnessing the transformative power of Augmented Reality (AR). We blend cutting-edge technology with captivating stories of the past, creating immersive experiences that bring history vividly to life. Whether they are exploring ancient ruins or wandering through modern museums, visitors are treated to entertaining and evocative experiences designed by ARtGlass.

What We Do

ARtGlass provides software and services for historic sites, museums, and attractions, enabling them to transform their visitor experience. Our proprietary TourBuilder platform allows us to craft unique, interactive experiences tailored to the specific stories of each site. We are best known for our groundbreaking wearable experiences, deployed on hands-free, transparent smartglasses, and we also design tours for tablets and cell phones.

During our wearable tours, visitors don smartglasses that overlay AR content onto real-world settings, transforming how they interact with historic sites. Picture standing on a historic battlefield and witnessing key moments come to life, or walking through an ancient palace and hearing the voices of its past residents. Our experiences are memorable, educational, immersive, and cutting-edge.

Our Vision

We believe in making history accessible, immersive, and engaging and are leveraging AR technology to transform the future of cultural tourism. ARtGlass collaborates globally with cultural institutions and heritage sites to ensure that history is experienced, not merely observed. Whether at Hegra, Pompeii, or other iconic locations, we bring the world's stories to life.

Hegra: An Example of Our Groundbreaking Work

In November 2023, ARtGlass launched a 2-hour Extended Reality (XR) tour at Hegra, Saudi Arabia's first UNESCO World Heritage site.

Collaborative procurement also requires flexible models to adapt to the ever-changing needs of the sector. By embracing these forward-thinking approaches, Abu Dhabi is positioning itself to meet future demands efficiently and sustainably.

Al Saeedi highlights the importance of this philosophy: “Collaboration between government entities, private sector partners and international organisations will further strengthen procurement strategies, bringing new resources and innovative solutions into play. This combined approach will ensure that government procurement remains agile, efficient and able to drive impactful change across the region.”

By investing in human capital, Abu Dhabi ensures its workforce can manage intricate supply chains and incorporate sustainable practices, positioning the department as a leader in procurement innovation.

Digital transformation’s sustainability impact

The GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) region, Al Saeedi explains, is playing host to significant ongoing procurement transformations driven by economic diversification, regulatory reforms and technological advancements.

He observes that these changes align with the region’s efforts to move beyond oil and gas, with investments in renewable energy, healthcare, technology and tourism.

For Al Saeedi, this evolution ties directly to the adoption of digital tools: "Looking to the future of governmental procurement and supply chain operations, I see a field that's rapidly evolving, embracing digital transformation and redefining its role in achieving wider strategic goals."

The region's governments are increasingly adopting advanced e-procurement platforms that streamline operations, reduce administrative workloads and enhance data accuracy. By deepening digital integration, Abu Dhabi aims to set new standards for procurement excellence. Al Saeedi also believes that this transformation should work hand in hand with sustainability initiatives.

"Sustainability is no longer an option in procurement; it's a necessity," he asserts. "As stewards of organisational resources, we have a duty to incorporate eco-friendly and socially-responsible practices that align with broader environmental and ethical goals."

Procurement is stepping into a new era, one where environmental responsibility and digital transformation redefine the rulebook. Al Saeedi envisions a future where procurement strategies embrace sustainability as a core principle, blending lifecycle assessments, supplier sustainability scores and carbon footprint reduction initiatives.

He says: "I believe future procurement strategies will involve a comprehensive approach to sustainability, integrating lifecycle assessments, supplier sustainability scores and initiatives to reduce carbon footprints. These strategies will redefine how we evaluate suppliers, giving weight to environmental and social metrics alongside cost and quality."

> "Sustainability is no longer an option in procurement; it's a necessity"
>
> **WALEED AL SAEEDI**
> DIRECTOR OF CAPITAL PROJECTS,
> DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE
> AND TOURISM

Procurement is no longer about simply closing transactions; it's now a transformative tool for achieving broader economic and environmental objectives.

"Procurement professionals play a crucial role in driving success in government sectors by ensuring efficiency, transparency and cost-effectiveness," Al Saeedi continues.

By nurturing collaboration, talent and leveraging cutting-edge technologies, organisations are increasingly well-prepared to navigate a complex and rapidly-changing landscape.

Building procurement capacity for tomorrow

For governments, building procurement capacity is vital to future success.

> “To me, digital transformation in this field represents more than just implementing new systems – it’s a fundamental shift in how procurement can drive value, enhance transparency and create resilience in the supply chain”
>
> **WALEED AL SAEEDI**
> DIRECTOR OF CAPITAL PROJECTS,
> DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE
> AND TOURISM

Al Saeedi highlights the importance of investing in people: “Building procurement capacity is critical for future success. Looking to the future of governmental procurement and supply chain operations, I see a field that’s rapidly evolving, embracing digital transformation and redefining its role in achieving wider strategic goals.”

This investment ensures procurement professionals can meet rising demands, from handling intricate supply chains to embedding sustainability into every process. Programmes focusing on upskilling through certifications, workshops and knowledge-sharing prepare teams for the ever-changing regulatory environment and global trends.

Looking to the future, digital tools are reshaping procurement operations. The region’s governments are adopting advanced e-procurement platforms to streamline processes, reduce administrative burdens and enhance data accuracy.

Yet, Al Saeedi believes the real breakthroughs lie ahead: “The real potential lies in deepening this digital integration through technologies such as AI, predictive analytics and blockchain.”

These tools promise transparency, traceability and data-driven decisions, setting a new benchmark for government procurement.

As procurement evolves, its role in achieving wider strategic goals is becoming clearer. Al Saeedi’s leadership through times of transformation in the sector give valuable lessons about the balance of innovation, collaboration and sustainability – ensuring it will remain a pillar of regional success. ○

AI

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UTOMATION: Growing Influence on Business Processes

Qlik, Smartsheet and Mitel executives examine current AI-driven automation, highlighting the productivity gains, and the challenges, that the new system brings

WRITTEN BY: KRISTIAN MCCANN

ROUNDTABLE PANELISTS

URMILA KUKREJA

DIRECTOR OF PRODUCT MANAGEMENT

SMARTSHEET

NICK MAGNUSON

HEAD OF AI

QLIK

LUIZ DOMINGOS

CTO

MITEL

AI is going through sectors and processes and transforming them as it goes along.

A famous example is ChatGPT and its effect on content creation. However, aside from the headline-grabbing applications, AI is having a keen effect on automation and its use across various industries, driving efficiency, reducing costs and enabling new applications that redefine how businesses operate.

What was once a system capable of automating processes in a preprogrammed and rigid fashion is now able to handle complex, data-driven tasks previously only capable with a human operator, with implications stretching from customer service to project management.

This AI landscape presents exciting possibilities if utilised, but comes with its own set of challenges. So how should enterprises looking to add intelligence to their automation processes go about aiming to integrate this?

The current state of AI automation

AI's role in automation is rapidly expanding as businesses see the potential for increased efficiency and productivity.

Urmila Kukreja, Director of Product Management at Smartsheet, explains how we are experiencing a "significant moment for automation in our industry as generative AI tools and technologies rapidly evolve.

"Automation itself is not new," Urmila continues, "but with the help of AI, automation workflow building has levelled up by adding intelligence to tasks and processes."

Smartsheet, for example, utilises AI to streamline repetitive tasks, such as categorising incoming feature requests, which reduces manual intervention and increases overall efficiency.

The drive towards automating these repetitive processes is reshaping sectors that require precision, such as human resources and product management, by accelerating task completion and reducing errors.

Incorporating AI into automation means businesses can leverage its predictive power and adaptability.

Nick Magnuson, Head of AI at Qlik, highlights that many organisations are "under pressure to incorporate AI", as automation is now central to industries like healthcare, manufacturing and sales.

"The current landscape is full of hope, scepticism and high expectations – fundamentally altering how businesses utilise technology," explains Nick.

AI-powered automation helps optimise human workflows, supporting decisions that improve productivity and reduce operational costs.

This shift is not just enhancing the speed of business processes; it is fostering a transformative approach that elevates routine operations to strategic initiatives, aligning with business goals for agility and scalability.

AI automation has already proved invaluable in communications, particularly in industries like healthcare and finance.

Luiz Domingos, CTO at Mitel, emphasises that AI-driven automation tools, such as intelligent assistants and real-time transcription services, are "delivering fast, efficient and contextually accurate customer service.

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"AI automation tools include intelligent assistant chat – and speech-bots, automated speech recognition (ASR), Text to Speech (TTS), real-time transcription, summarisation, sentiment analysis and virtual contact centre agents," says Luiz.

The adoption of AI in automation is creating new possibilities, enabling faster responses, personalised interactions and streamlined workflows, which enhance user experiences while optimising operational costs.

> **"The current landscape is full of hope, scepticism and high expectations – fundamentally altering how businesses utilise technology"**
>
> **NICK MAGNUSON**
> HEAD OF AI,
> QLIK

Challenges in adoption

Yet despite its benefits, it is this journey to integrate AI into automation processes that presents distinct challenges, particularly around data quality, governance and trust.

Data quality is key as it is the fuel that feeds the process of automation. However, getting the amounts of data needed, in a clean and structured way, is a task in itself (and one that automation would ironically help).

Nick points out that "automation on top of low-quality, ungoverned data is an untenable proposition", stressing that poor data management can stall AI projects.

"High consequence, low confidence use cases are obviously not ideal proving grounds for use of automation in AI," he says. "Conversely, high confidence and high frequency use cases may prove better situated to benefit from automated processes."

In sectors like manufacturing and finance, where the stakes are high, companies must ensure the robustness of their data infrastructure before implementing AI in automation.

Ethical and regulatory compliance also complicate the adoption of AI in automation, particularly in sectors handling sensitive data.

One way to tackle such ethical aspects and thus build trust, as Urmila highlights, is to build trust in AI outcomes: "Challenges in the field include gaining trust in the AI results, understanding areas where a human touch is still needed and evaluating the costs and evolving capabilities of large language models (LLMs) as they continue to develop," she says. "Explaining and understanding AI results, as well as the ability to govern and monitor AI execution, can go a long way toward building trust."

Trust in AI automation is necessary for its adoption and transparency is crucial in enabling organisations to rely on these systems. Moreover, data governance and cost considerations remain critical as businesses weigh the benefits of AI against the resource demands of adopting such technology and the regulatory punishments for not complying.

Luiz highlights, however, that this is challenging, with many enterprises operating in hybrid environments, causing compatibility issues due to a mix of premise-based, private and public cloud applications.

4X Parts
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3K Required Parts
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“Organisations must navigate concerns around data privacy and AI, and regulations like GDPR and the AI Act in the EU and the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA) in the US will make data handling a compliance issue,” he explains.

As AI becomes more embedded in automation, organisations must navigate these regulatory complexities, ensuring data protection and ethical standards are upheld across all automated processes.

MEET THE EXPERTS

URMILA KUKREJA

TITLE: DIRECTOR OF PRODUCT MANAGEMENT

COMPANY: SMARTSHEET

Urmila Kukreja is a customer-focused, data-driven technology product leader with a Master's in Computer Science. With a proven track record in building high-performance teams, she excels at collaborating cross-functionally and fostering innovation. Urmila is adept at bringing clarity to ambiguous situations and leading teams to successful delivery. As the Director of Product Management at Smartsheet, she continues to drive success by combining her technical expertise with her leadership abilities.

> **"Organisations must navigate concerns around data privacy and AI"**
>
> LUIZ DOMINGOS
> CTO,
> MITEL

NICK MAGNUSON

TITLE: HEAD OF AI

COMPANY: QLIK

Nick is the Head of AI at Qlik, where he leads the company's AI strategy, solution development, and innovation. He joined Qlik following the acquisition of Big Squid, where he served as CEO. With a background in machine learning and predictive analytics, Nick has held executive roles in customer success, product, and engineering.

LUIZ DOMINGOS

TITLE: CTO

COMPANY: MITEL

Luiz Domingos is an innovative and passionate technology leader with extensive experience in the Communications and IT industries. With a proven track record in evaluating disruptive emerging technologies, he excels in assessing their business value and translating them into a unified corporate portfolio vision. Luiz has consistently demonstrated his ability to create and execute strategic roadmap plans, driving technological advancements and business growth.

Moving forward to AI-driven automation

The argument for AI in automation is clear. But what is not yet decided is the shape it will take.

With advances in large language models, Urmila anticipates that automation will move towards optimisation for "higher-quality experience", which will provide users with more relevant, personalised interactions.

This evolution will allow AI not only to complete automated tasks but to suggest optimisations within workflows, further enhancing productivity. Small businesses, in particular, stand to benefit from these advances, as they gain access to sophisticated automation tools without requiring expert intervention.

In addition to quality, the concept of 'human-in-the-loop' will play a prominent role in the future of automation. Nick stresses the importance of involving human touchpoints in AI processes, noting that organisations need "stepping stone" workflows that empower humans to monitor and adjust autonomous systems.

This practice is already evident in emerging Agentic AI applications, which allow for real-time adaptations and adjustments in response to complex business challenges.

And in preparing for the future of AI in automation, Luiz advises that organisations "develop a clear AI strategy" and "focus on proven technology" to drive successful AI adoption.

This approach includes setting up pilot programs and training employees to work effectively with AI tools. By building a robust foundation for AI-driven automation, companies can mitigate the risks associated with rapid implementation while enhancing employee buy-in and user trust.

AI-driven automation is becoming integral to business operations, allowing them to improve operations and free up resources to focus on further value-added services.

Aligning how to implement it with a clear strategy will allow organisations to harness its full potential while fostering a culture of trust and adaptability. ○

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STAINABLE DATA ENTRE LEADERS IN BRAZIL

WRITTEN BY:
AMBER JACKSON

PRODUCED BY:
LEWIS VAUGHAN

Elea
DATA CENTERS

Alessandro Lombardi, President at Elea Data Centers, explains how the data centre company commits to green strategies to meet AI demand sustainably

The Brazilian data centre industry has continued to expand, becoming the largest market in the LATAM region. In 2023 alone, the country accounted for around 40% of the LATAM region's total investment.

Amid such growth in the regional market, data centre operators like Elea

Elea RJO2 data centre project

Data Centers are committed to supporting continued industry growth in Brazil.

Alessandro Lombardi, President of Elea Data Centers, founded the company in 2018 and has since acted as Chairman of the board. He is responsible for helping the company navigate the next exciting chapter for the data centre industry in Brazil, particularly in the midst of the global technology boom.

“Brazil has become a magnet for international clients and therefore I find myself travelling much more than I did in 2018,” he explains. “My role is now to act as somewhat of a representative of Brazilian digital infrastructure.”

AI and cloud demand: Remaining competitive

Demand for AI and cloud services continues to increase across the data centre industry, which is inevitably creating significant challenges for operators.

Currently, Elea Data Centers has nine facilities running in Brazil, operating across five different states. Elea's is the only geographically differentiated platform in Brazil, with most other companies just operating in the São Paulo-Rio market.

"Our clients have demands that appear unexpectedly and they need services immediately, which can be challenging in terms of planning," Alessandro explains. "The real challenge is being able to plan where demand is going in these times."

He adds: "We operate in other markets because we believe that digital infrastructure needs to be geographically spread. Especially because of latency and also with AI, you really need to have compute capacity closer to the population.

"We understand how unique Brazil is in terms of green energy capacity and therefore we operate green data centres."

As a result of these developments, the company has witnessed significant increases in demand for disruptive technologies. When it comes to AI in particular, Elea Data Centers is making sure it is remaining competitive within the industry by being flexible amid rapid growth.

ALESSANDRO LOMBARDI

TITLE: **PRESIDENT**

With over two decades of experience in private equity, corporate finance and business development, Alessandro Lombardi leads Elea Data Centers, Brazil's leading provider of sustainable digital infrastructure and colocation services.

As President of Elea, Alessandro continues to drive innovation and sustainable growth in the Latin American digital infrastructure sector as a visionary leader. He is also the founder and CEO of Piemonte Holding, a diversified investment firm that partners with global institutions like Goldman Sachs.

Alessandro has successfully executed numerous M&A transactions and raised capital for businesses in the digital infrastructure, defense and technology sectors.

Passionate about creating value and impact through his investments, Alessandro is a board member of PUC-Rio, the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro and EARJ, the American School in Rio de Janeiro, demonstrating his commitment to education and community development.

He holds a graduate degree in Economics and Business Administration from Luiss Guido Carli University and he has studied the History of Philosophy and Art at prestigious Italian universities.

Alessandro Lombardi,
President,
Elea Data Centers

One Vertiv
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Alessandro Lombardi with Giordano Albertazzi, CEO of Vertiv

"The cloud wave in Brazil caused a 10x increase in megawatt (MW) demand," Alessandro notes. "Now with AI, you rarely see a client that doesn't have at least 100MW of demand. We are seeing an incredible demand – and the data centre is different. As a result, the product and the real estate are different."

He adds: "We're being flexible with what our clients need because new technology, especially AI, is new also for our clients. So you need to be flexible. You need to accept that things may change. You want to build an environment which is prone to innovation, development and new technology."

Offering a new type of data centre

With such large demand, the LATAM data centre market is becoming increasingly competitive. As a result, Elea Data Centers is preparing to meet continued demand from hyperscalers, particularly when it comes to AI and cloud.

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PIONEERING LIQUID COOLING TO SUPPORT AI

As a leading data centre provider in Brazil, Elea Data Centers is committed to supporting the region's AI growth. In order to achieve this, the company is using liquid cooling systems from leading data centre infrastructure company Vertiv for its purpose-built AI data centres in Brazil.

The companies announced the partnership at the end of 2024. The cooling systems from Vertiv are part of Elea's first-phase investment of US$300m for AI-ready data centres. These systems are designed to ultimately help Brazil succeed in the global AI race, with Vertiv providing hundreds of cooling distribution units (CDUs) to support liquid cooling for AI applications.

"We have collaborated on a hybrid-cooled data wall for AI and machine learning deployment," Alessandro explains.

"It is the first of its kind to show what we know in Latin America. Vertiv is the first company showcasing this kind of equipment in the Americas. The very first CDUs come from the Mexican factory, which is coming to our São Paulo site. And we will be deployed at the end of 2025."

When it comes to impact in Brazil, Alessandro is optimistic, particularly as the country's data centre market becomes more mature.

"I'm very happy to pioneer this technology in Brazil and Latin America," he says. "I have to say that the flexibility that we've learned to have in our engineering department was key, because this is really new. You need to think ahead.

"Vertiv is incredible. They are preparing for a rack of one megawatt density. So imagine a rack of one."

He adds: "Many data centres have critical capacity. Since we have a lot of green energy available as an ecosystem, I understand that the impact will be to attract more and more AI deployment to the region."

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> “In Brazil, we have the chance to run data centres in a better way that is more sustainable and humanised”
>
> **ALESSANDRO LOMBARDI,**
> PRESIDENT,
> ELEA DATA CENTERS

“The strategy we are using is to have enough land adjacent to our existing sites to make sure that all of our data centres – or at least most of them – are expandable,” Alessandro comments. “We are also building energy infrastructure substations, transformers and distribution to our sites to make sure that we have some hundreds of megawatts close to our sites ready to deploy. Because that’s key. When the money grows so much, you need to be ready.”

He adds: “We are investing heavily in energy infrastructure in order to be ready for 2025 and 2026, whilst there are not as many competitors.”

São Paulo remains the largest data centre market in LATAM, with its availability increasing to 62.1 MW from 52.3 MW in Q1 2024. However,

demand continues to outpace supply – particularly in more densely populated areas – which means operators are now needing to implement strategies to address the critical need for data centre capacity.

“São Paulo is highly populated, but it is less than 10% of the Brazilian population. For the other 90%, we are differentiating ourselves because, instead of going to the outskirts, we are preparing to design data centres which are humanised. It’s important that our architecture can live together with the urban ecosystem,” Alessandro says. “We continue to grow at a very fast pace because we truly believe that digitalisation needs to have the support of the community.

“In Brazil, we have the chance to run data centres in a better way that is more sustainable and humanised. We see it to be an amicable kind of infrastructure.”

Being a sustainable pioneer

Elea Data Centers has a strong track record when it comes to its sustainability strategy, as it operates all of its facilities with renewable energy. In order

Elea RJO1 data centre, Rio de Janeiro

> “We’re being flexible with what our clients need because new technology – especially AI – is new also for our clients”
>
> **ALESSANDRO LOMBARDI,**
> PRESIDENT,
> ELEA DATA CENTERS

to ensure that sustainability is kept at the forefront of its strategy, Elea Data Centers is committed to ensuring that its operations remain energy efficient, with the prevention of excess water consumption.

“What we have done is make sure that our commitment to the environment is not only marketing, but it’s true and factual,” Alessandro explains. “We have agreed with our syndicate of banks, which are some of the largest in Brazil, to measure some of our key performance

indicators every year. If we don't meet these key performance indicators and improve them in the next five or six years, we will end up paying more interest." He adds: "We are also committed to power usage efficiency (PUE) and water usage efficiency (WUE) to use less power and water. This is also measured regularly."

Alessandro is also very honest about other initiatives that the company remains very passionate about, including women in leadership.

"We truly believe, especially in the IT market in Latin America, that it's

> "We will have to continue to make changes and I want our people, together with our clients, to be ready and to jump into the future"
>
> **ALESSANDRO LOMBARDI,**
> PRESIDENT,
> ELEA DATA CENTERS

Elea employees

very important to have women at the top of the company," he says. "We have been working to hire women for different areas of the company, but very few of these are in leadership roles. So we have committed to achieving 40% of women in leadership roles by 2028, which is a benchmark commitment in LATAM."

Mendes Holler: Delivering on strategy

In order to make good on its expansion promises, Elea Data Centers is partnering with leading mission-critical construction company Mendes Holler. With more than 30 years within the market, the company is a true leader in construction solutions and delivers high availability engineering projects, whilst solving complex engineering and technology problems.

"Mendes Holler for any Latin American market player needs no introduction," Alessandro explains. "They have built 60% of Latin American data centres, with 700MW of building construction engineering of data centres across Brazil, Mexico, Colombia and Chile."

Mendes Holler holds a vision for constant improvement in its services moving forward, whilst remaining eager to prioritise sustainability across all of its projects. For Elea Data Centers, Mendes Holler is a significant partner to have.

"At C-level, they are involved in the details, so you know who to call," Alessandro notes. "Therefore, it strengthens a lot of what we are doing and the way we present ourselves to our clients maintains their confidence, because everybody knows that Mendes Holler has delivered hundreds of megawatts already."

The end-goal with this partnership is clear: to speed up time-to-market. With Mendes Holler's efficient reputation, the construction leader will help Elea Data Centers meet its deadlines faster.

"That is the most important thing – delivering on what we have agreed upon in due course. The key is on-time delivery. The global data centre market often experiences delays, but Mendes Holler mitigates this risk heavily."

> **“The global data centre market often experiences delays, but Mendes Holler mitigates this risk heavily”**
>
> ALESSANDRO LOMBARDI,
> PRESIDENT,
> ELEA DATA CENTERS

A key player in Brazil

Looking ahead, Elea Data Centers is seeking to continue being a pioneering influence across the LATAM data centre industry. To ensure that Brazil remains a key figure in the global AI data centre landscape, Alessandro notes that the company seeks to help its international clients understand its commitment to green energy.

“Transmission is great in Brazil. It’s not an exaggeration to say that it is better than in the US – already in São Paulo,

capacity has already been increased by 40%. We have a uniqueness that nobody else has in the market right now, with eight gigawatts of green power currently available."

As Brazil enters a new phase of digitalisation, this green power is going to be essential to support AI use within the region.

"We are already ahead of other countries because of our green power capacity," Alessandro says. "To address the unique requirements of AI moving forward, it is about having a heavy engineering capacity and continuing to be flexible. First, we were designing sites with 30 kilowatt (KW) density per rack. Now, the same site is 100KW per rack. It's an enormous difference and I expect this to continue in the future.

"GPUs will continue to grow in their capacity, and with it their energy consumption. We will have to continue to make changes and I want our people, together with our clients, to be ready and to jump into the future."

BALANCING INNOVATION AND REGULATIONS IN AUTONOM DRIVING

AI is revolutionising autonomous tech, but balancing innovation with regulation is vital to ensure safety, trust, and widespread adoption.

WRITTEN BY: KRISTIAN MCCANN

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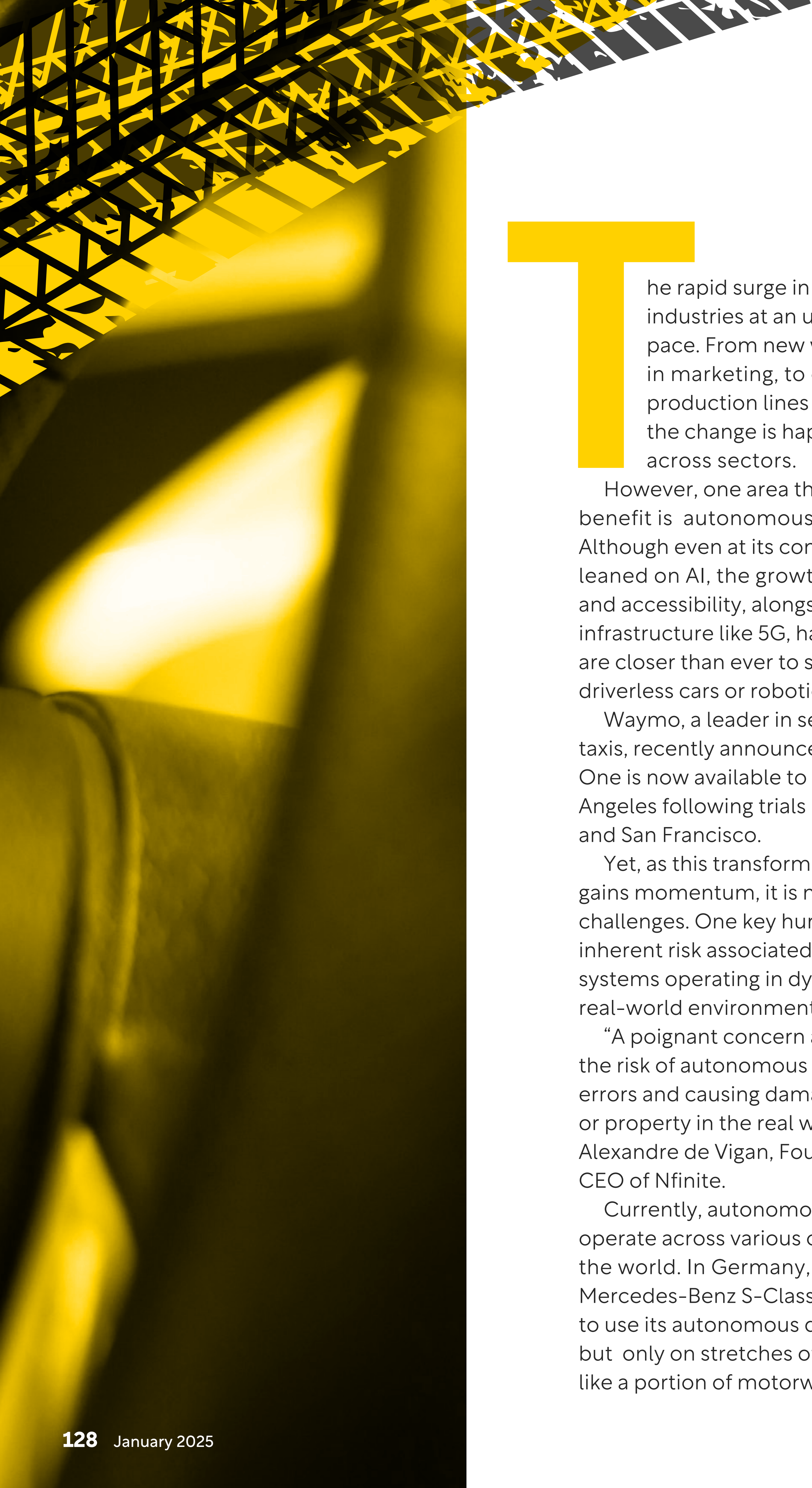

The rapid surge in AI is transforming industries at an unprecedented pace. From new ways of working in marketing, to optimising production lines in manufacturing, the change is happening across sectors.

However, one area that stands to benefit is autonomous technology. Although even at its conception it heavily leaned on AI, the growth in its abilities and accessibility, alongside supporting infrastructure like 5G, has meant that we are closer than ever to seeing things like driverless cars or robotic helpers.

Waymo, a leader in self-driving taxis, recently announced its Waymo One is now available to anyone in Los Angeles following trials in Phoenix and San Francisco.

Yet, as this transformative wave gains momentum, it is not without challenges. One key hurdle is the inherent risk associated with AI systems operating in dynamic, real-world environments.

"A poignant concern at present is the risk of autonomous vehicles making errors and causing damage to people or property in the real world," says Alexandre de Vigan, Founder and CEO of Nfinite.

Currently, autonomous cars can operate across various countries in the world. In Germany, the Level 3 Mercedes-Benz S-Class is allowed to use its autonomous driving feature but only on stretches of specific roads, like a portion of motorway.

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Range 135km
ODO 2662km

Good afternoon,
Sam
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AIRBAG

"To trust AI with the responsibilities that come with mass adoption into the everyday, it ultimately needs to meet our human visual capabilities," says Alexandre. This highlights the need for stringent standards and safeguards to ensure safety and reliability.

This is because regulators have recognised that autonomous cars can do well and drive largely accident-free on a motorway. Yet, when it comes to city driving, where more things need to be considered, they remain sceptical.

Indeed, in 2023, GM's Cruise Automation saw a significant setback when one of its vehicles was involved as a secondary vehicle in a pedestrian accident. The incident halted Cruise operations for several months, put its safety measures and development under scrutiny and saw it the subject of an independent investigation.

Regulations with such technology revolve around questions of accountability, like who bears responsibility when an autonomous system fails - the driver or the car. Moreover, ensuring that AI systems

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ALEXANDRE DE VIGAN

TITLE: **FOUNDER AND CEO**

COMPANY: **NFINITE**

are free from biases and perform equitably across diverse scenarios is critical to building public trust.

Another pressing concern is fostering collaboration between established industry leaders and emerging innovators. While companies like Tesla are advancing the field, a diverse ecosystem of start-ups and academic institutions can drive unique contributions. “This opens up possibilities for a wide range of providers, including emerging startups and academic ventures, to engage and push the boundaries of these technologies” says Alexandre.

As AI continues to drive autonomous technology forward, it is clear that balancing innovation with regulation is the key to its successful adoption.

Spatial AI’s ability to enhance understanding and interaction with the environment is a pivotal step to bridging the gap, but for these advancements to reach their full potential, they must be underpinned by robust rules that ensure safety, equity, and accountability.

Only then can we fully embrace the era of autonomous machines, transforming the way we navigate and interact with the world.

REGULATIONS: US AND EUROPE

US

In the US, the regulatory landscape varies significantly from state to state, with each state responsible for its own autonomous driving laws.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has proposed safety standards and sought public input on automated driving system safety principles.

Several states, including California and Nevada, have enacted legislation to authorise the testing and operation of autonomous vehicles on public roads, with autonomous taxis already operating in locales within such states.

EU

The EU has been working towards a harmonised approach to autonomous vehicle regulation. Germany, in particular, has been at the forefront of these efforts:

Germany

Germany has established a legal framework for both Level 3 and Level 4 autonomous driving.

The country allows autonomous driving on public roads and has opened up public roads for large-scale tests with autonomous passenger cars and trucks. Key aspects of German regulations include:

JAGUAR
WAYMO

- Requirements for approving specific automated vehicles for public road use
- Obligations for manufacturers, owners, and operators
- Requirement for a black box in all autonomous vehicles on public roads

Other European countries
The Netherlands and Sweden also allow autonomous driving on public roads and have established frameworks for testing and deployment.

The EU as a whole is working towards common standards and guidelines for the safe and efficient deployment of autonomous vehicles.

UK
The UK has taken a proactive stance on autonomous vehicle regulation with the Automated Vehicles Act 2024. This comprehensive legislation establishes a rigorous authorisation regime, requiring self-driving vehicles to pass stringent safety tests. The Act introduces new legal entities such as Authorised Self-Driving Entities and defines the concept of a ‘user-in-charge’. It aims to improve road safety by mandating that automated vehicles meet or exceed the safety standards of careful human drivers.

REGULATIONS: APAC

China

China has emerged as a global leader in autonomous vehicle development and regulations. In fact, the country is testing more driverless cars than any other country.

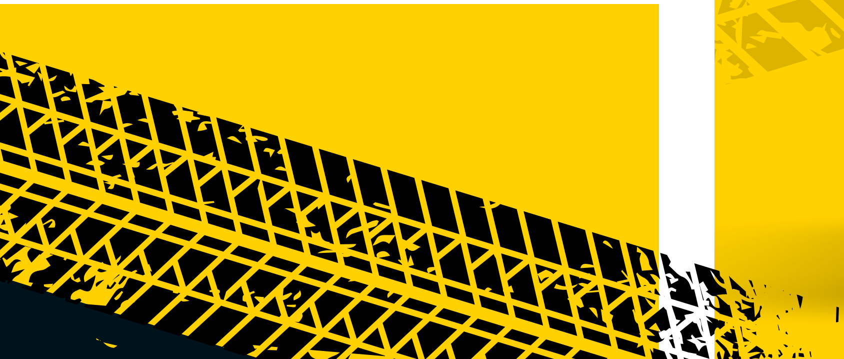
As a result, the country has:

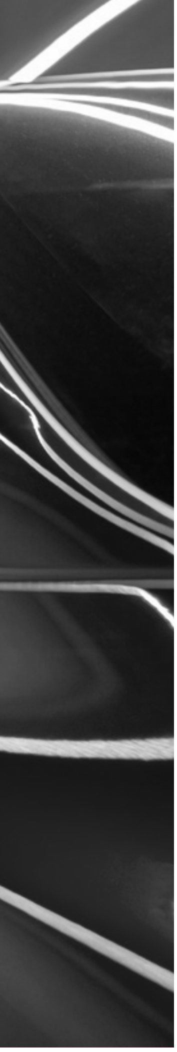
- Established pilot zones for autonomous vehicle testing
- Implemented regulations for road testing
- Introduced policies to support research and development, including tax incentives and subsidies
- Actively worked on developing national standards for autonomous vehicles, focusing on safety, cybersecurity, and data protection

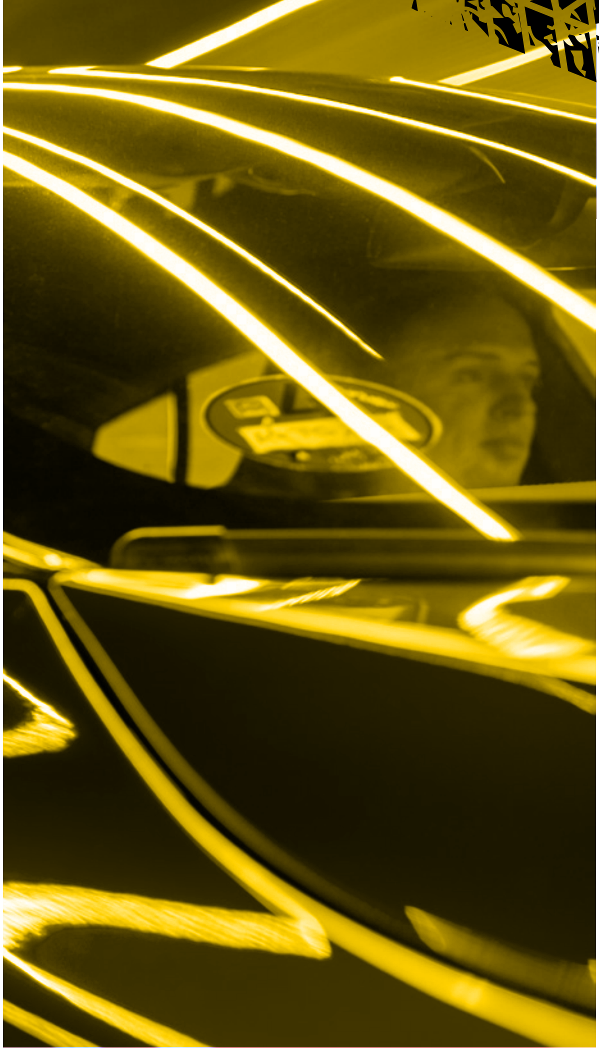
Japan

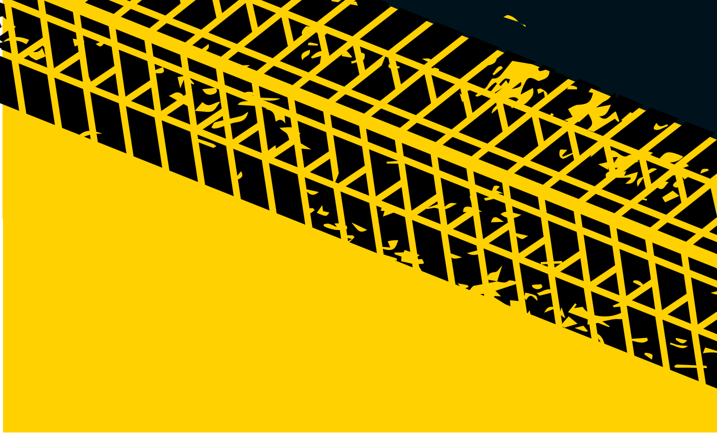
Japan has taken significant steps in regulating autonomous vehicles, including:

- Amending existing laws like the Road Traffic Act and Road Transport Vehicle Act









- Establishing the Strategic Innovation Program (SIP) to promote research and development

- Collaborating with international organisations to develop common standards

- Defining penalties for businesses, including permit revocation

- Allowing delivery robots up to 6 km/h to travel on sidewalks

South Korea

South Korea's government's Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport laying out a Mobility Innovation Roadmap in 2022 that targeted the introduction of self-driving taxis by 2025.

Currently, autonomous taxis are operating in areas of Seoul, with the vehicles allowed to drive themselves on major roads with four or more lanes, while a safety monitor will take control on narrower residential roads.

Australia

Current Australian laws do not allow for the use of automated vehicles on public roads, with government guidance saying the laws are designed for vehicles with human drivers. ○

EMBRACING DIGITAL
HOW **VWV** IS RESHA
LEGAL SERVICES

WRITTEN BY:
KRISTIAN
MCCANN

PRODUCED BY:
CONNOR
DODDINGTON

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Vizards

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VWV's Director of Digital, Data and Technology **Dave Bloor** explains how the law firm integrates technology to bring customisation value to its clients

In an era where AI and digital transformation are revolutionising industries across the board, law firms face a critical juncture: adapt to the technological revolution or risk being left behind.

The legal sector, perhaps traditionally known for its conservative approach to change, is experiencing unprecedented disruption as client expectations evolve and technological capabilities expand exponentially.

Yet for forward-thinking law firms, this technological revolution represents not just a challenge but an opportunity to revolutionise service delivery and client relationships.

VWV, a full-service law firm, has positioned itself at the forefront of this transformation, making strategic investments in technology and digital capabilities to enhance its service offerings and client experience.

A strategic approach to digital transformation

At the helm of this digital transformation is Dave Bloor, VWV's Director of Digital, Data and Technology, whose appointment 12 months ago signals the firm's commitment to technological innovation.

Dave Bloor,
Director of Digital,
Data and Technology,
VWV

DAVE BLOOR

TITLE: **DIRECTOR OF DIGITAL, DATA AND TECHNOLOGY**

Dave Bloor, VWV's Director of Digital, Data, and Technology, brings 24 years of expertise in digital transformation and operational excellence, having driven results across various industries. His impressive career includes impactful roles at Ford, Screwfix, Clarks and Foot Anstey LLP. Dave's appointment aligns with VWV's vision for growth and innovation, aiming to enhance operational capabilities and strategic direction. He is particularly inspired by VWV's commitment to leveraging technology to revolutionise the delivery of legal services. With a proven track record, Dave is set to be a pivotal asset in advancing the firm's goals of transformation and industry leadership.

With a rich background in technology leadership and change management across various industries, including Ford Motor Company, Clarks Shoes, and Kingfisher Group, Dave brings a fresh perspective to the legal sector's digital evolution.

"My vision behind the digital data technology function is to enable the business with intuitive, modern, agile and innovative collaboration tools and the support that's needed to excel in a market-leading law firm," he explains.

Being a full-service law firm, VWV's approach to technological innovation is firmly grounded in client needs. The firm is establishing a dedicated product team that works alongside their Business Development team to conduct targeted client listening exercises and understand where digital can enrich relationships.

"We will prototype solutions for clients at a rapid pace from the discussions we have with them that are looking at bridging how our legal team works and how the client wants to work," Dave explains.

Operating across nine target sectors – including education, charities, digital technology, healthcare, life sciences and pharmaceuticals, banking and finance, real estate and infrastructure, government and public services, and individuals and families – its clients are diverse.

VWV has therefore recognised the need for a comprehensive digital strategy that enhances service delivery across all practice areas.

A key component of VWV's digital transformation is its focus on data accessibility and utilisation. "It's about ensuring that our data is accessible but it also gives us greater insights into our client's expectations and needs and using that allows us to make smarter decisions," Dave emphasises.

The data-driven approach is complemented by deep client relationships and active listening to ensure technology solutions truly meet client needs.

> **“It’s really clear that Gen AI is going to be disruptive to the way that legals, indeed every industry, delivers its services”**
>
> **DAVE BLOOR**
> DIRECTOR OF DIGITAL,
> DATA AND TECHNOLOGY,
> VWV

This follows the firm’s approach to technology integration, which is deeply rooted in its client-centric philosophy. “It’s about putting the client-centric lens on things and working out in our toolkit of technology how do we best apply that to each client relationship we have rather than assuming every client wants to work in a standard way,” Dave says.

Pioneering innovation through partnerships

In a significant move to accelerate its AI capabilities, VWV has formed a strategic partnership with Robin AI.

“It’s really clear that Gen AI is going to be disruptive to the way that legal firms, indeed every industry, deliver their services,” Dave explains. “Looking for a partner like Robin AI was really one about a symbiotic relationship of product enhancement development and insights at the pace of which the partner could work at and at the pace of which we needed to and wanted to work at.”

Robin AI have partnered with VWV on the development of AI so that it can build their internal use of it and so they can wield it to meet specific client needs.

This collaboration extends beyond mere technology adoption, however, it encompasses education and awareness initiatives within the firm. The partnership

has enabled VWV to access cutting-edge AI solutions while simultaneously building internal capabilities.

With its focus on the legal sector, Robin AI allows VWV to navigate the use of disruptive technologies whilst still adhering to the strict rules and regulations required of a legal firm.

"I think it's less about just the automation side of things with Gen AI," Dave explains. "Where I think it's about is more actually how knowledge is constructed and shared both within the firm but also with clients in a way which is naturally still upholding the standards and regulations that are required in providing legal services."

In addition to allowing VWV to foster a far broader understanding of the impact that AI is having in the industry and having a relationship which is about sharing insights about where value from AI is coming from. Outside of just the product, that's where Robin AI also brings real value to the work and services that we offer and that they offer in the overall relationship.

Robin AI™ & VWV

Robin AI is proud to partner with VWV delivering the world's first strategic initiative that puts Legal AI in the hands of the trainee solicitors to further the firm's deep commitment to innovation in the delivery of legal services.

"Robin AI worked closely with VWV to integrate Legal AI into their processes, empowering trainees to leverage AI to solve complex challenges."

James Clough
Chief Technology Officer at Robin AI

"Working with Robin AI has been a fantastic experience. From the delivery of workshops to having access to Legal AI in a safe and secure way, our partnership has been an invaluable part of the innovation programme at VWV."

Martin Hasler, Innovation Lead at VWV

"The relationship that I've been able to experience and have with Robin AI has been one that has been centered around a true innovation partnership. They really helped our trainees demystify some of the what they saw as technology jargon into meaningful day to day tools that they could use."

Dave Bloor
Director of Digital Data and Technology at VWV

Thinking about how you can leverage Legal AI in your firm to improve productivity and employee experience?

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Robin AI & VWV
Customer Story

"They have supported us in running training for our trainees around what is prompt engineering and how you would use it and raising awareness there," he explains.

Transforming client service delivery

VWV's technological transformation is fundamentally changing how the firm delivers legal services.

"We have wanted to share as much information with clients as possible so they can self-serve where they need to," Dave states. This includes implementing portal technologies that enable clients to access precedents and make informed business decisions more efficiently.

The firm is also exploring innovative ways to leverage AI in client interactions. "We're also looking at how we use Gen AI and we are looking at working with some of our clients to understand where they may feel comfortable using Gen AI solutions to interact with as a first step as opposed to lawyer time," he continues.

But alongside technology, one of a company's most valuable resources is its people. Therefore, one of VWV's most innovative initiatives is its training innovation programme launched in the last six months.

This programme places trainees at the forefront of reimagining legal service delivery, with a particular focus on Gen AI.

"We've taken all our trainees and we've put them into teams; we've trained them in things like design thinking, project management, what's happening in legal regarding legal tech and why it's important," says Dave.

This investment in future talent represents a significant shift in how law firms approach technology adoption. With the broader objective being around innovation in the firms DNA, is integral to VWV, and that is seeing them put hundreds of people through this programme over the next five years.

A digitally-enabled full-service future

Looking ahead, VWV's technological strategy focuses on several key areas including the integration of low/no-code technologies and AI-powered knowledge sharing.

“We will prototype solutions for clients at a rapid pace from the discussions we have with them that are looking at bridging how our legal team works and how the client wants to work”

DAVE BLOOR
DIRECTOR OF DIGITAL, DATA AND TECHNOLOGY, VWV

I think being able to extend the tools that we use within the firm so that our clients can use them is definitely an opportunity that is worth considering and looking at leveraging,” Dave reflects.

Equally, VWV is seeking further to utilise this technology they have integrated internally to support certain parts of its client base in a new way.

“We have many clients who have in-house legal teams who can’t access some of the legal tech tools that law firms can. I think there’s opportunities there for us to help them understand how we can work together and alleviate some of their challenges,” Dave explains.

Beyond customising its services for its clients, the firm wants to continue its commitment to sustainable technology practices. Already, VWV has been recognised for its sustainability efforts with a Clean City Award Scheme (CCAS) Gold Award.

So now, they want to extend that commitment to incorporate ESG considerations into its procurement decisions. Highlighting the firm’s holistic

95%

A LexisNexis report found 95% of legal professionals said that Gen AI would have a notable impact on law.

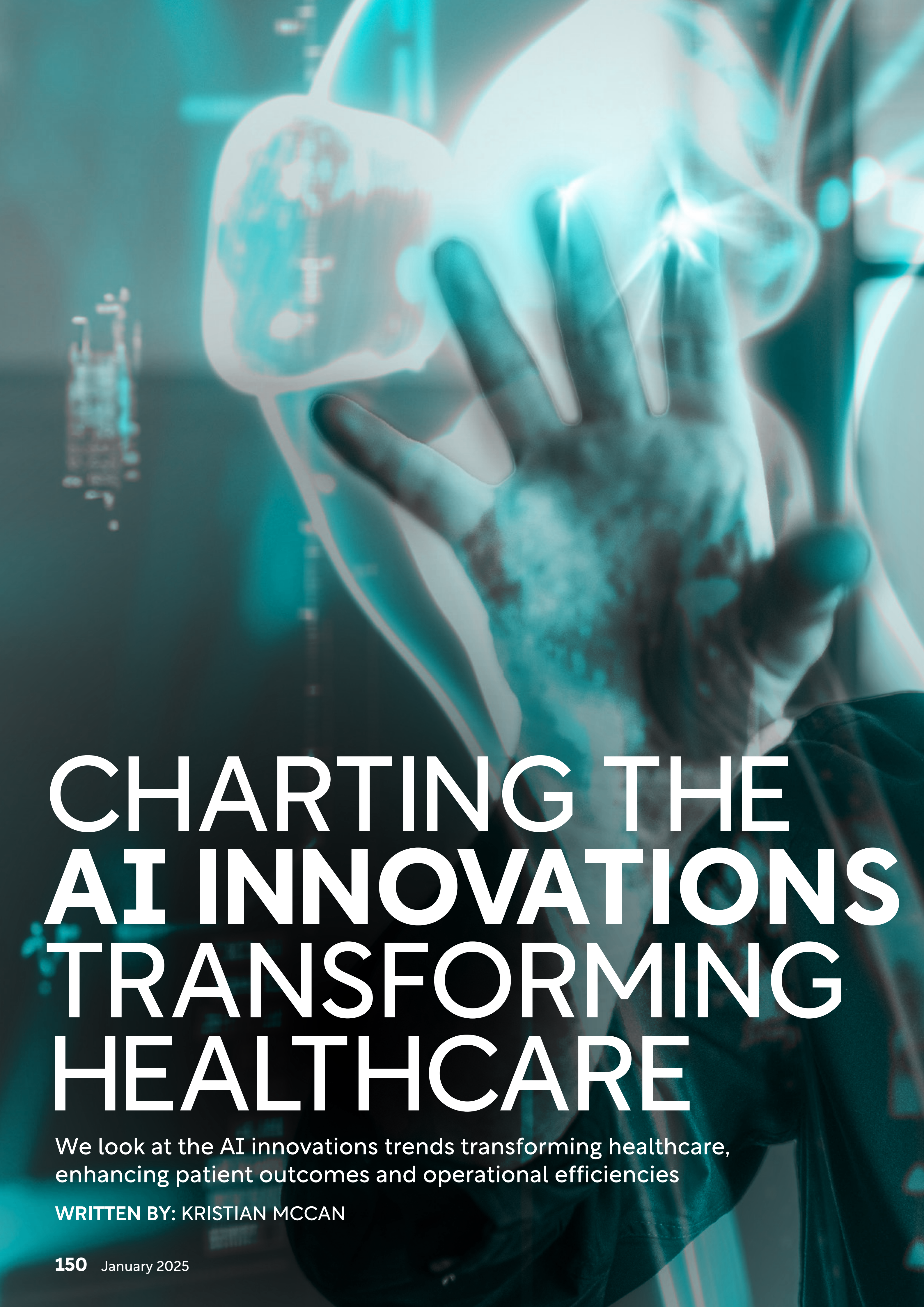
approach to technology investment, Dave emphasises "cheapest isn't always best; cheapest isn't always ethical. So we are bearing that in mind in terms of how we procure."

A law firm fit for the technological age

As the legal sector continues its digital transformation journey, VWV's approach demonstrates how traditional law firms can successfully embrace technological innovation while maintaining their core values and service quality.

Under Dave's leadership, the firm is able to adapt to technological change and actively shaping the future of legal service delivery internally and for its clients.

Its balanced approach to technological innovation coupled with a strong focus on human expertise and client relationships sets a compelling example for how law firms can thrive in an increasingly digital future. Through its comprehensive digital strategy and commitment to innovation, VWV is not just preparing for the future of legal services – it's actively creating it. ○



CHARTING THE **AI INNOVATIONS** TRANSFORMING HEALTHCARE

We look at the AI innovations trends transforming healthcare, enhancing patient outcomes and operational efficiencies

WRITTEN BY: KRISTIAN MCCAN

The healthcare sector has been under immense pressure in recent years, largely due to the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The strain on services, combined with workforce shortages and rising demand, has left many healthcare systems struggling to keep up. Backlogs in appointments, delayed treatments, and overwhelmed hospital wards have become a common reality in many parts of the world. Additionally, the financial challenges of managing an ageing population and the increased prevalence of chronic conditions continue to stretch already constrained budgets. As healthcare providers look for ways to address these challenges, the need for innovative solutions has never been greater.

Amidst this pressure, AI technologies have emerged as a beacon of hope, offering the potential to alleviate many of the burdens facing healthcare systems. With the promise of improving efficiency, reducing costs, and enhancing patient care, AI is increasingly seen as a key part of the solution to the sector's growing problems. From streamlining administrative tasks to assisting in complex medical procedures, the applications of AI seem almost limitless. As a result, many are turning to AI as a way to optimise resources, improve patient outcomes, and ultimately unlock new efficiencies within the system.

But how exactly is AI being integrated into healthcare, and where can it make the most impact? From diagnostic tools to patient management systems, we will examine the areas where AI is already making a difference and where it holds the most promise for the future.

Current use of AI in healthcare

The current healthcare innovation landscape is characterised by unprecedented technological dynamism.

As Tom Mellor, Head of Health & Life Sciences at BJSS puts it, "It is hard to think of another time that has seen as many transformative healthcare innovations as now."

Recent advancements in AI, including Gen AI, data-enhanced analytics, and virtual reality are driving substantial changes across the UK healthcare sector. These technologies are not only transforming healthcare today but also hold the potential to drive even more significant change in the coming years.

Emerging trends: personalisation and proactive care

Personalised healthcare is emerging as a cornerstone of AI-driven medical innovation.

Access Group's innovation, Access Evo, exemplifies this trend by using large language models trained in health and care terminology to understand users' specific needs.

This enables more efficient care plan management and helps healthcare providers stay proactive in responding to changes before critical issues arise.

TOM MELLOR

TITLE: **HEAD OF HEALTH AND LIFE SCIENCES**

COMPANY: **BJSS**

Tom Mellor leads BJSS's Healthcare team, driving digital transformation in NHS and life sciences with 18 years of engineering and management consultancy expertise.

SecurityScorecard

Take supply chain cyber risk management to the MAX

MAX collaborates closely with your team and vendors to promptly address and resolve critical cybersecurity vulnerabilities, fortifying your supply chain defenses against potential compromises.

Explore MAX

"We believe in personalised care, moving away from the 'one-size-fits-all' model to a more tailored approach," says Alan.

AI is increasingly being deployed to automate routine administrative tasks, thereby allowing healthcare professionals to dedicate more time to direct patient interaction.

This shift is particularly crucial in a sector experiencing immense pressures on services, funding, and staff retention. By alleviating administrative burdens, AI enables a more human-centred approach to care.

The potential for proactive and preventative care is also another particularly exciting area AI is effecting.

AI can help healthcare providers anticipate and respond to potential health issues before they become critical.

For instance, AI technologies are being used in various applications such as appointment scheduling and patient triage. These innovations help make operations more efficient while allowing clinicians to focus on what truly matters—patient interaction and care.

Moreover, AI's role extends beyond administrative tasks; it can significantly enhance clinical outcomes.

A notable example is the collaboration between BJSS and CARE Fertility in developing an AI model that improves embryo selection during in vitro fertilisation (IVF) treatments.

By analysing a dataset of over 500 million embryo images, this model enhances accuracy and speed in embryo assessments, ultimately increasing successful pregnancy rates.

Beyond current capabilities

As we look towards the future of healthcare innovations, several key factors will influence their evolution.

One significant shift in the UK is the move towards at home healthcare delivery alongside an increasing adoption of telehealth services. Innovations like virtual wards integrate wearable devices and smart home sensors for continuous patient monitoring from home.

Tom highlights that this decentralisation “not only alleviates pressure on healthcare facilities but also streamlines resource allocation,” leading to shorter waiting times and more efficient spending.

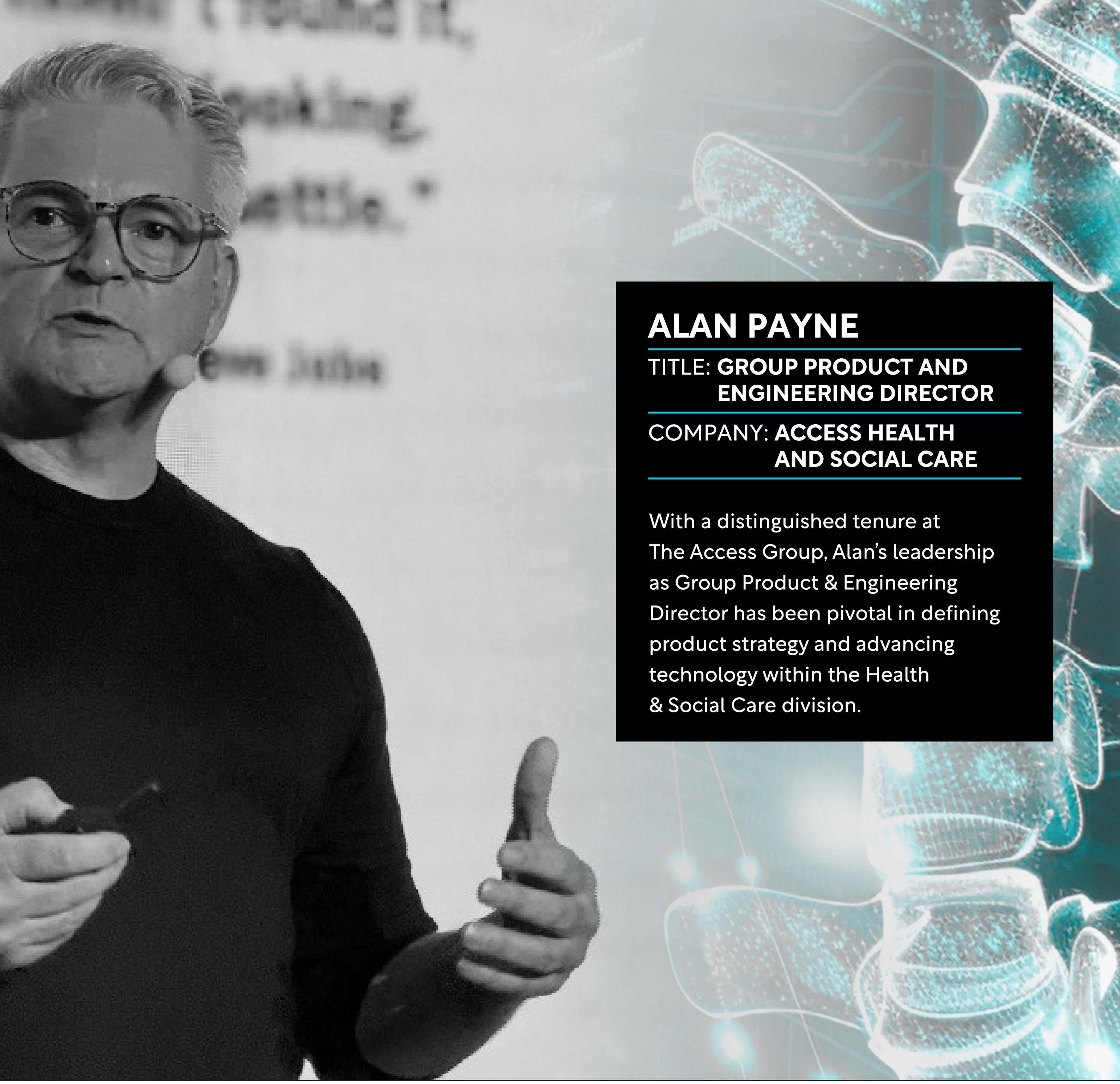
With proprietary AI technology trained on a massive dataset of 350 million patients, large biomedical knowledge-graphs, and clinical trial data, QuantHealth, an AI company conducting patient-centric drug simulations, has a platform that can predict trial outcomes with significant accuracy.

It can test thousands of protocol variations and discover the optimal trial design for success, helping R&D teams more accurately and rapidly predict clinical trial results and decide whether a trial should proceed.

Indeed, technology like this helped the world move out of lockdown by combatting Covid with a vaccine.

Years before Moderna created a highly effective mRNA vaccine against COVID, the company put into place AI systems to accelerate the research process. These systems allowed the company to ready its vaccine for human trials in just 42 days.

Indeed, studies undertaken by Bekryl reveal that the implementation of AI could save the entire industry around US$70bn by 2028.



ALAN PAYNE

TITLE: **GROUP PRODUCT AND ENGINEERING DIRECTOR**

COMPANY: **ACCESS HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**

With a distinguished tenure at The Access Group, Alan's leadership as Group Product & Engineering Director has been pivotal in defining product strategy and advancing technology within the Health & Social Care division.

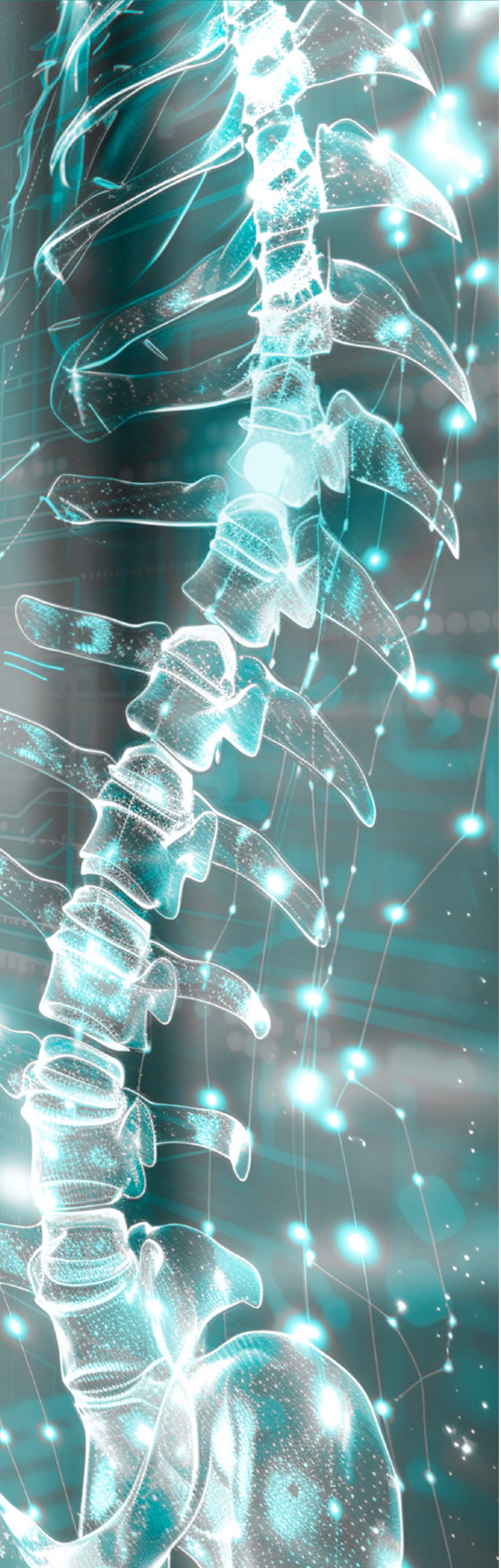
Preparing for the AI-driven healthcare future

To fully harness the potential of AI in healthcare organisations must take several key steps. Investment in technology and infrastructure will be paramount; adopting AI solutions can streamline administrative tasks while implementing data analytic tools enhances patient care and operational efficiency.

However, organisations must also ensure that staff are adequately trained to utilise these new technologies effectively.

Upskilling through training programmes will empower healthcare professionals to adapt seamlessly to innovations while fostering a culture of continuous learning within their institutions.

Collaboration among technology providers, healthcare organisations, and regulatory bodies will be



> **“To reap the benefits of technology including AI, organisations must invest not just financially but also culturally”**
>
> **TOM MELLOR,**
> HEAD OF HEALTH
> AND LIFE SCIENCES,
> BJSS

essential for navigating this complex landscape effectively.

“Our goal should be to harness AI in ways that bolster health and care professionals’ capabilities,” says Alan Payne, Group Product and Engineering Director at Access Health and Social Care.

By working together to establish robust governance frameworks that prioritise ethical considerations regarding patient data privacy and security concerns organisations can build trust with patients while maximising the benefits of AI technologies.

“To reap the benefits of technology including AI, organisations must invest not just financially but also culturally,” Tom explains.

As we navigate the transformative landscape of AI innovations in healthcare, it becomes evident that we are entering a new era that promises to revolutionise patient care, medical research, and health management.

AI’s capacity to analyse vast data sets enables earlier disease detection and personalised treatment plans, significantly enhancing patient outcomes while alleviating pressure on healthcare systems.

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WRITTEN BY:
LIBBY
HARGREAVES

PRODUCED BY:
TOM
VENTURO

FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS TO FIERY CCESS

From a US$900 parking lot start-up to a global sensation, Dave's Hot Chicken's CTO explains how he blends spicy flavours with cutting-edge technology

Dave's Hot Chicken started out in an East Hollywood parking lot with a budget of just US$900 back in 2017.

Now, the brand is synonymous with fiery, flavour-packed chicken – proving that big dreams often have humble beginnings.

This story of grit and determination highlights the meteoric rise of a brand that has become a household name in just a few short years – enabled largely by technology.

From its humble food stand beginnings, Dave's Hot Chicken has transformed into a fast-growing international phenomenon, captivating taste buds and winning over fans across the globe.

Early on, authenticity and excellence spoke for itself at Dave's Hot Chicken. The brand's commitment to delivering mouth-watering spicy chicken proved to be an irresistible draw for food lovers. The buzz around Dave's began spreading by word of mouth and soon it became clear that there was something special about this hot chicken spot. The brand's momentum picked up steam in 2019, when a partnership with investors, including Bill Phelps, former CEO of Wetzel's Pretzels, as well as film producer John Davis, set the stage for rapid growth.

DAVE'S

By 2021, Dave's Hot Chicken had more than 30 locations in states including Colorado, Texas and Ohio and further expanded into Wisconsin, Florida and New Jersey in 2022. This marked a critical turning point for the brand. As the restaurant chain scaled up, it became clear that Dave's was ready to compete with other major fast-casual chains. The move from being a regional phenomenon to becoming a national powerhouse was a significant milestone. The company then set its sights even higher, expanding internationally with locations in Toronto, Dubai, Doha and Riyadh. The global appeal of Dave's Hot Chicken, with its unique spice levels and crave-worthy flavours, proved that the brand's popularity wasn't confined to US borders. With the UK next on its list, it is clear that Dave's ambitions are truly global.

Leon Davoyan, Chief Technology Officer at Dave's Hot Chicken, is well placed to discuss the organisation's ongoing global transformation. With responsibility for ensuring the brand leads the way when it comes to tech and innovation, Leon's own career had beginnings not unlike Dave's founders.

He began in hospitality at Universal Studios in 1994, before quickly venturing into the point of sale (POS) department at a time when POS systems were "very new".

"Since then, I've just been down this career journey of working for high growth companies, be that it's a QSR brand or a quick casual

> **"People ask me, 'how d you grow a company so quickly?'. And my answer is always to invest in the right solution for where you' going, not for right now**
>
> **LEON DAVOYAN**
> CTO,
> DAVE'S HOT CHICKEN

LEON DAVOYAN

TITLE: **CTO**

Leon is an innovative technology leader with a proven record in driving digital transformation and global expansion across industries like hospitality, entertainment and gaming. Starting in theme parks, his career has spanned leadership roles in quick service, fine dining, gaming, nightlife and hotels, helping three companies grow from startup to global brands. As CTO of Dave's Hot Chicken, he leads technology strategies to scale the business and maintain its position as the fastest growing chain in America, leveraging innovation to stay relevant with its core demographic in a rapidly evolving landscape.

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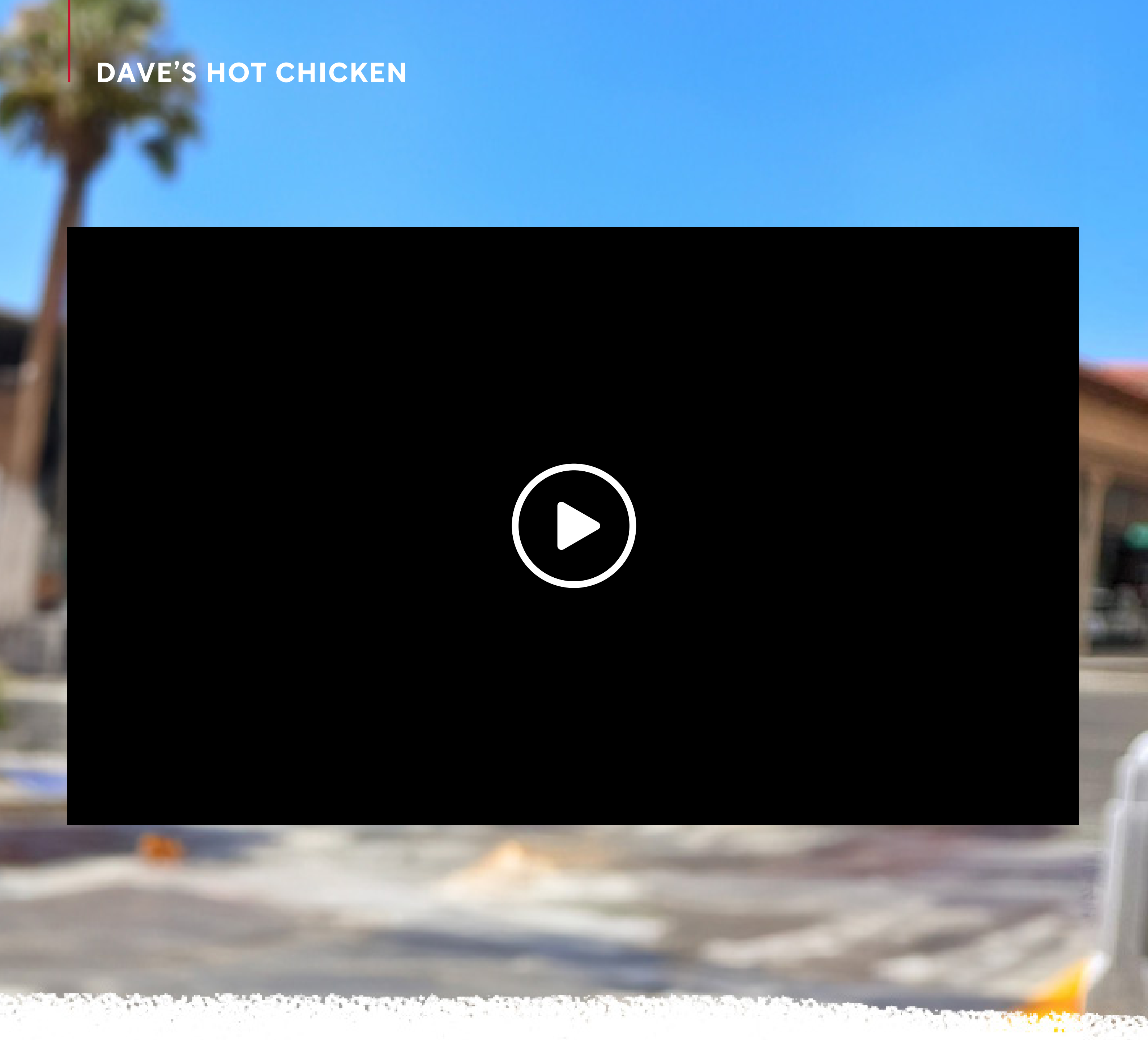


brand that wants to grow 50 to a hundred stores a year,” Leon adds. “Or even if they’re a bespoke fine dining or nightclub location that wants to just grow their brand very quickly, but obviously at the rate of one or two locations a year.
That’s what I just fell into specialising in and is what got me to the CTO position here at Dave’s Hot Chicken.”

This early exposure to emerging technology laid the groundwork for his passion and, over the years, he has taught himself everything he knows.

Navigating fast-paced technological transformation

Technology has played a vital role in Dave’s Hot Chicken’s rapid growth.

Recognising the swift evolution of tech, especially AI, the company built its systems to be reliable, adaptable and open to integration.

Leon stresses the importance of investing in technology that aligns with the company’s future goals: “People ask me, ‘how do you grow a company so quickly?’. And my answer is always to invest

in the right solution for where you're going, not for right now."

This forward-thinking mindset led to Dave's Hot Chicken upgrading its POS system to manage increasing data needs.

Despite initial staff scepticism, the switch to a system with a robust database and API has not only streamlined operations but also set the company up for ongoing success.

Of course, navigating the ever-changing tech world is not without its challenges.

> **"AI is often dismissed as a buzzword, but it's set to revolutionise everything"**
>
> **LEON DAVOYAN**
> CTO,
> DAVE'S HOT CHICKEN

"Technology is evolving so quickly that, even when you make a decision, by the time you've implemented it, there are probably 10 other solutions that are better," Leon acknowledges.

He believes in decisive action but also in the courage to pivot if needed. Doubling down on bad decisions is simply not an option.

"If you don't evolve, especially today, you're going to be left behind," Leon continues. "When you make the wrong decision, raise your hand, talk to your leadership and pivot. Just forget it and move on."

Despite its technological focus, Dave's Hot Chicken remains rooted in its simple mission: to "blow your mind" with its selection of spicy tenders and sliders.

With a menu ranging from 'No Spice' to 'Reaper,' the aim is to deliver unforgettable flavours.

"Even if you just take a tiny bite, you have to taste the Reaper," Leon dares.

With more than 200 locations launched over the course of just two years, Dave's Hot Chicken is primed for the future.

Leon likens building its tech infrastructure to constructing a house.

"You have to have a really strong and solid foundation," he explains.

"Otherwise, when you build things on top of that foundation, you might be successful, but eventually it's gonna crack and things are gonna start crumbling."

With this strong foundation in place, he believes the company is ready for the next wave of innovation.

more than

200

locations globally, Dave's Hot Chicken is one of the fastest-growing restaurants in the world

Expanding and innovating for the future

Dave's Hot Chicken is stepping into the future with its new Web 3.0 ordering portal. For Leon, Web 3.0 signifies a move toward a more immersive and interactive digital environment.

"Web 1.0 shifted news from traditional media and introduced e-commerce," he reflects. "Web 2.0 connected us through social media."

He paints a vivid picture of a future where virtual meetings and events become the norm. "Web 3.0 will make us all couch potatoes," he jokes, envisioning a world where people can attend board meetings from their living rooms. But even in this increasingly virtual realm, "a couch potato is still going to get hungry."

Looking ahead, Leon is "absolutely thrilled" about the brand's upcoming UK expansion: "When we open that first location, expect a grand affair with a massive celebration."

The company is also working on major upgrades to its KDS system and developing a new mobile app,

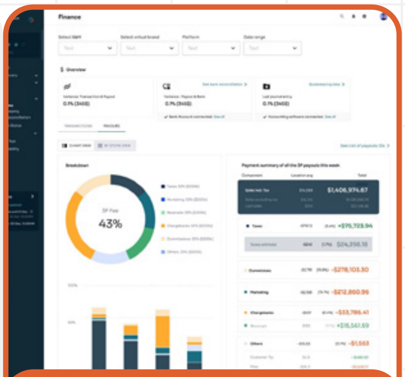
DAVE'S HOT CHICKEN
FIRE LANE

setting the stage for what Leon describes as "groundbreaking developments" over the next 12 to 18 months.

These initiatives are designed to enhance customer experience and streamline operations, keeping the brand ahead in a competitive market.

Meanwhile, strategic partnerships play a crucial role in Dave's Hot Chicken's approach to growth and innovation.

Loop, a key partner that tackles significant challenges with third-party delivery services, manages delivery connections and resolves issues automatically.



LOOP AI Delivery Intelligence Platform

Measure, Protect and Grow your 3PD Revenue Profitably

Loop is the best in-class full-stack solution for all your 3rd party delivery operations helping you grow sales while reducing bleed to boost your profitability

LEARN MORE

"Loop is a no brainer for a modern food brand"

- Jim Bitticks, President & COO Dave's Hot Chicken

DAVE'S HOT CHICKEN
121

"Loop is a unicorn for us. If it's not the top vendor that we have then it's definitely in the top three. It solves a very giant pain point that we've had in the restaurant industry since the inception of third party delivery providers. It essentially solves 100% of the problem for us, which is a tall order."

"If a connection drops, Loop's algorithm identifies and rectifies the problem, often before we even realise," Leon notes.

Financial reconciliation is another area where Loop's solutions shine. Given the complex commissions and fees from third-party delivery providers, Loop helps Dave's Hot Chicken decode these statements and reconcile them.

"They've also been crucial in tackling fraud and recovering revenue lost from delivery errors," Leon continues. "These partnerships are not just about technology but also about enhancing operational efficiency and ensuring customer satisfaction."

> **"If a connection drops, Loop's algorithm identifies and rectifies the problem, often before we even realise"**
>
> **LEON DAVOYAN**
> CTO,
> DAVE'S HOT CHICKEN

Similarly, data analytics lies at the heart of Dave's Hot Chicken's strategy.

The company's Customer Data Platform (CDP) provides detailed insights into customer behaviour, allowing for more refined strategies and an improved overall customer experience.

By leveraging this data, the company makes informed decisions that directly enhance customer engagement.

Expanding this data strategy will be critical as Dave's Hot Chicken continues to scale. Every piece of information gathered helps the brand understand its customers better, tailor experiences and fine-tune its operations. In today's data-driven world, this type of insight is invaluable. By building on these capabilities, Dave's Hot Chicken is set to remain ahead of the curve as the food industry continues to evolve.

Leon also sees AI as a game-changer for the industry. "AI is often dismissed as a buzzword, but it's set to revolutionise everything," he asserts.

Real-time data insights provided by AI will reshape how decisions are made, allowing GMs and shift leads to optimise restaurant operations quickly and effectively.

This shift towards agile and responsive business strategies will also extend to marketing, where AI's real-time insights will enable the company to act faster than traditional analysts.

With Leon's tech-driven leadership, Dave's Hot Chicken is embracing AI, Web3.0 and important strategic partnerships and is well placed to navigate the fast-changing landscape of the food industry.

Dave's Hot Chicken doesn't just serve meals; it represents a fiery journey from parking-lot dream to spicy global favourite.

MONTH IN NUM

2.5 hours per day overall

Marketers using AI tools save an average of 3 hours per piece of content and 2.5 hours per day overall. (synthesia)

80%

A high proportion of marketers believe Gen AI will transform content creation in 2024. (HubSpot)

90%

A significant majority of online content may come from Gen AI by 2026. (Europol)

BERS

76%

Around three-quarters of Gen AI use among marketers is for basic content creation and writing copy. (Salesforce)

salesforce

60%

Three in five marketers who use Gen AI content are concerned it could harm brand reputation due to bias, plagiarism or values misalignment. (synthesia)

55%

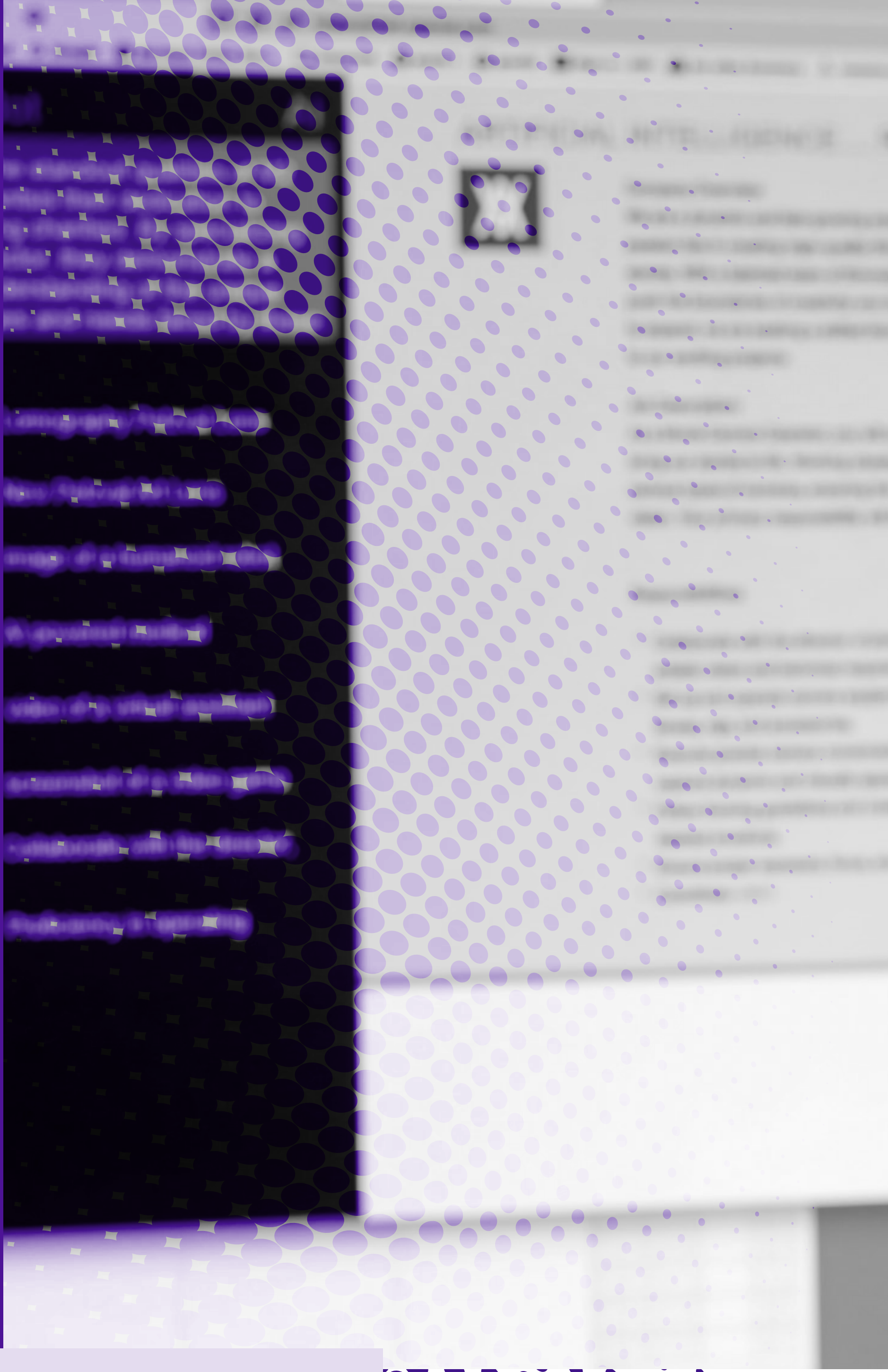
More than half of businesses are most eager to use AI for content creation. (synthesia)

NAVIGATING YOU
INSIGHTS AN

As AI reshapes industries, execs at **UST** and **Wolters Kluwer** weigh in on investment trends, challenges, and strategies for enterprises to adopt the tech

WRITTEN BY: KRISTIAN MCCANN

R AI INVESTMENT:
D STRATEGIES



MEET OUR EXPERTS:

MANU GOPINATH

COO

UST

BRIAN DIFFIN

EVP, CTO

WOLTERS KLUWER
TAX & ACCOUNTING

The past few years have been a whirlwind for AI, with the technology experiencing unprecedented adoption across industries and reshaping the global investment landscape.

AI's meteoric rise is perhaps best exemplified by Nvidia, which at the time of writing surged to become the world's most valuable company on the back of its AI chip dominance.

This remarkable ascent underscores the red-hot nature of enterprises of all sizes looking to invest in AI and reap the benefits it can bring.

However, with everything moving so fast, many may be wondering where to start.

To shed light on this rapidly evolving sector, AI Magazine reached out to industry insiders for their expert insights.

From emerging technologies to potential regulatory hurdles, we examine the factors that could shape the next chapter of AI investments and innovation.

How would you describe the current landscape of AI investment?

Manu Gopinath, Chief Operating Officer at UST:
While there has been a backlash against the hype surrounding AI, companies will continue to invest, moving beyond pilot projects to drive efficiency, innovation, and competitive advantage, leveraging AI for real-time decision-making, personalised customer experiences, and predictive analytics.

Brian Diffin, EVP, CTO at Wolters Kluwer Tax & Accounting:
AI investments throughout the world have been steadily increasing for many years and those investments have been primarily focused around various machine learning models and approaches. However when ChatGPT was announced at the end of 2022, it created a firestorm of interest and investment in Gen AI. All the hyperscalers and several start ups quickly spun up like-kind LLM projects and AI Assistants with conversational interfaces.

AI INVESTMENT BY THE NUMBERS

#1: World's Most Valuable

Nvidia has surged to become the world's #1 most valuable company due to its dominance in AI chips

Late 2022 Turning Point

ChatGPT's launch in late 2022 triggered a "firestorm of interest" in Gen AI investment

Multiple Risk Factors

Organizations must balance against 6 key risks: bias, inaccuracy, hallucinations, security, IP theft, and compliance

MANU GOPINATH

MANU GOPINATH

TITLE: CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

COMPANY: UST

INDUSTRY: DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

As COO, Manu is responsible for business and client relationships across North America, Spain and LATAM markets, where he leads UST's Business Transformation Consulting practice that enables faster GTM for its customers.

BRIAN DIFFIN

BRIAN DIFFIN

TITLE: EVP, CTO

COMPANY: WOLTERS KLUWER TAX & ACCOUNTING

INDUSTRY: TAX & ACCOUNTING

Brian is a technology executive with a comprehensive set of disciplines, leading a global technology organisation to establish and enforce architectural standards, best practices with respect to automated scalability testing and innovation processes.

What emerging trends are you observing in AI investment?

Manu Gopinath, Chief Operating Officer at UST:
We can see an increased focus on internal processes and productivity for enterprise customers. Internal AI pilot projects are easier to measure for ROI and impact. Enterprises can now plan investment roadmaps for customer-facing applications and projects.

Manufacturing, financial services, and technology domains were early adopters of AI investments. We can see increased investments planned for healthcare and retail. AI-powered analytics is transforming data-enabled decision-making on operations and customer services.

Brian Diffin, EVP, CTO at Wolters Kluwer Tax & Accounting:
One emerging trend I see is that companies are spending more time and analysis to understand the cost of compute and other infrastructure when reviewing a Gen AI approach. For example, the LLM models are often very expensive to run, consuming a great deal of processing power and other data centre infrastructure utilisation. Small Language Models (SLM) can be significantly less expensive and also be better suited at niche subject material, and consequently, we see many companies starting to develop their own SLMs.

What are the key factors influencing the future of AI investment?

Manu Gopinath, Chief Operating Officer at UST:
Technological Advancements: Continuous innovations in AI algorithms, hardware, and data processing capabilities are expanding the range of viable applications. This creates innovative domain use cases to level the playing field for enterprise customers.

The future of AI investment is driven by several key factors. Proven models in industries such as manufacturing, financial services, and healthcare are spurring increased adoption and investment. Simultaneously, companies are recognising the need for robust AI infrastructure, leading to larger investment budgets.

Brian Diffin, EVP, CTO at Wolters Kluwer Tax & Accounting:
Ultimately, I believe the number one factor with AI investments is all about return on that investment (ROI). Currently, I believe all companies, from the largest hyperscaler to small, individuals introducing AI into their products, are still trying to understand how to monetize their AI investments. Certainly, Nvidia and anyone involved in building and cooling data centres are generating windfalls of revenue and profits, however many businesses are still searching for and experimenting with different pricing models and approaches to ensure an ROI.

AI

AI

Which challenges are there in the field of AI Investment?

Manu Gopinath, Chief Operating Officer at UST:
Budget Constraints and ROI uncertainty are the most significant challenges in AI investment. Companies must take a strategic, phased approach to AI investment by starting with pilot projects to demonstrate tangible ROI before scaling up. Closely tracking and communicating the business value generated from AI initiatives and identifying pivot points would be crucial.

> “Ultimately, I believe the number one factor with AI investments is all about return on that investment”
>
> BRIAN DIFFIN,
> EVP, CTO,
> WOLTERS KLUWER TAX & ACCOUNTING

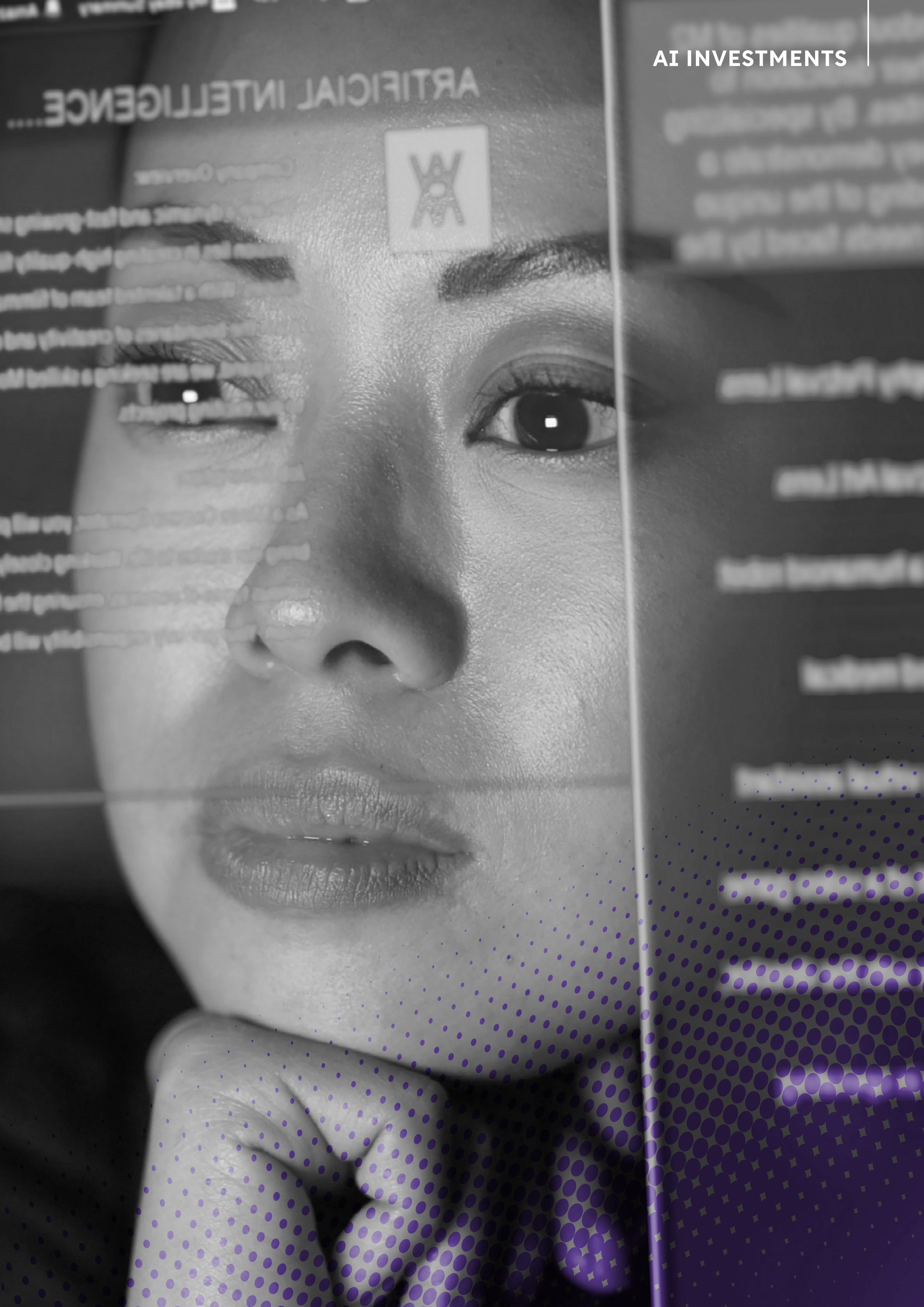
Brian Diffin, EVP, CTO at Wolters Kluwer Tax & Accounting:
There needs to be an analysis of what kind of AI is best utilised for a specific use case. Each AI approach, model and learning technique has to be evaluated for “best fit”, and ‘best fit” has multiple parameters. For example, which approach will work best to bring the highest value functionality, how quickly can it be developed and launched into the market, what is the cost to operate the AI technical approach, and how will be it be maintained.

How should organisations prepare for the evolution of AI investment as it and businesses change?

Manu Gopinath, Chief Operating Officer at UST:
Organisations will need to fine-tune existing AI models for specific use cases and invest in AI talent and training, starting with developing a clear AI strategy, outlining how AI will drive value, improve operations, and enhance our competitiveness. It is crucial to start with specific use cases with the most immediate and measurable impact. Equally important is establishing robust data governance practices to ensure the quality and security of the data feeding our AI systems.

Brian Diffin, EVP, CTO at Wolters Kluwer Tax & Accounting:
Organisations will need to definitely upskill to make sure they have the human resource capacity to take advantage of the various AI technologies. Equally, they will also have to develop and govern an AI Ethical and Safety framework to make sure a plethora of risks are mitigated. Risks include introducing bias in algorithms or training data, producing inaccurate results or answers, hallucinations or unexplainable emergent properties, security risks, IP theft risks, and compliance risks. There is a very tight balance for all businesses leveraging AI to be nimble and agile, but also be safe and controlled. ○

> **“We can see an increased focus on internal processes and productivity for enterprise customers”**
>
> MANU GOPINATH,
> CHIEF
> OPERATING OFFICER AT UST


ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE....

PEGASUS
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HOW AI IS TRANSF THE AI

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RLINE INDUSTRY

Pegasus Airlines, **IAG**, **KLM** and **Lufthansa** have highlighted how AI can benefit the aviation sector and set new standards for customers and climate alike

WRITTEN BY: KRISTIAN MCCANN

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Check-in
Cabin Baggage one piece per passenger.
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The airline industry, although wielding fleets of humungous aircraft, flying hundreds of times a week and offering premier, champagne and lobster laden experiences for first class flyers, is an industry of complexity, high costs, and stringent safety requirements.

Airlines have even tried various schemes to bring up their thin profit margins, like Wizz airlines introducing an All You Can Fly as a way to fill up last minute empty seats.

Yet, the introduction and proliferation of AI may shift the focus from trying to increase the margin, to trying to optimise what's there.

Enhancing operational efficiency through AI

A prime example of this shift is the appointment of Ben Dias as Chief AI Scientist for International Airlines Group (IAG).

Ben has a 20-year career in data science and AI and is leading the group's AI strategy, focusing on creating scalable AI products that can enhance customer experience, improve operational efficiency, and advance sustainable practices.

"There's a huge opportunity to use AI across innovation and it's impressive the value and investment IAG are placing on this technology," said Ben.

The significance of Dias' appointment cannot be overstated, as it reflects the airline's increasing focus on harnessing AI's potential.

Already, IAG has opened labs in London and Barcelona to drive AI innovation across its operating airlines, which include British Airways, Aer Lingus, Iberia, and Vueling.

"AI has the potential to make our businesses perform better, help our employees and is essential to our long-term success," Jorge Saco, IAG's Chief Information, Procurement Services and Innovation Officer said following the appointment.

With such initiatives, IAG aims to capture a portion of the estimated US$45bn in potential value AI could generate for the airline industry globally, particularly through operational efficiencies, revenue optimisation, and customer service improvements.

AI's ability to transform airlines

AI's transformative impact in the airline industry can already be seen in several operational areas, especially in flight operations and safety.

Major airlines and aircraft manufacturers are integrating AI to monitor aircraft health and predict maintenance needs before issues arise.

Boeing, for example, has implemented its Airplane Health Management system, which uses AI to identify and anticipate maintenance needs, thus improving aircraft reliability and reducing unplanned maintenance delays.

JORGE SACO

TITLE: **CHIEF INFORMATION, PROCUREMENT SERVICES AND INNOVATION OFFICER**

COMPANY: **IAG**

INDUSTRY: **AIRLINE**

LOCATION: **UK**

Jorge is a successful, focused, and results-oriented digital, finance, and commercial leader with over 26 years' experience in data, technology, and transformation in the airline industry.

Similarly, Airbus's Skywise platform leverages AI to optimise flight routes and reduce fuel consumption. By identifying potential delays and technical faults in advance, this platform enables airlines to implement proactive measures, thereby enhancing operational efficiency.

Such applications demonstrate AI's ability to process large volumes of data in real-time and generate actionable insights, essential for the efficient functioning of an industry that operates under tight schedules and high safety standards.

This predictive maintenance approach has become increasingly valuable in minimising aircraft downtime, ensuring flights run on schedule, and ultimately providing passengers with a more reliable travel experience.

Jorge Saco,
Chief Information, Procurement Services and Innovation Officer, IAG

AI IN THE SKY

Swiss International Air Lines uses of AI technology has helped them optimise half the flights in its network and save 5 million Swiss francs (US$5.4m) in 2022.

EasyJet, for instance, has reported fewer cancellations and delays by using AI-driven predictive maintenance, highlighting the operational value of AI integration in day-to-day airline functions.

Beyond operational efficiency, AI is also making its mark on the customer experience, helping airlines better understand and respond to passenger needs.

Airlines such as KLM and Delta are employing AI-powered virtual assistants and chatbots that provide 24/7 support on booking, flight changes, and frequently asked questions. These AI-driven customer service solutions not only enhance accessibility but also personalise the customer experience by analysing passenger preferences.

Delta, for example, uses AI to recommend personalised in-flight entertainment options, catering to individual interests and creating a more enjoyable journey for each passenger.

And in a novel customer-facing application of AI, Pegasus Airlines has introduced a multilingual in-flight announcement system, using AI voice-cloning technology.

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BCG and KLM Bring AI to Life in Airline Operations

The system, launched on select routes, translates and delivers announcements in multiple languages, fostering a more inclusive experience for passengers from different linguistic backgrounds.

The latter was equally more impressive when taken into account that the AI system was developed by Pegasus's in-house innovation team.

Unlike many companies in the aviation industry that often rely on external vendors for technological solutions, Pegasus Airlines has chosen to keep innovation at the heart of its operations.

This approach became even more pronounced with the establishment of its Technology Innovation Lab in Silicon Valley, US, announced in 2023, from which their AI announcement ability spun out of.

Pegasus CEO Güliz Öztürk has outlined the company's vision to become a 'Digital Airline': "Our investments in technology stand out as one of the key elements that set us apart."

What's next for the tech?

Looking ahead, AI is set to drive significant advancements in airline

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GÜLIZ ÖZTÜRK

TITLE: **CEO**

COMPANY: **PEGASUS AIRLINES**

INDUSTRY: **AIRLINE**

LOCATION: **TURKEY**

Güliz has worked in the airline industry, for around 30 years, starting in roles like marketing and sales before growing into the role of CEO.

sustainability efforts and even the potential development of autonomous aircraft.

With global concerns around environmental impact, AI offers the means to optimise flight paths for fuel efficiency, thereby reducing emissions.

IAG, along with other major players, is increasingly focused on integrating AI for sustainable operations, aiming to balance customer demands with environmental responsibilities.

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Ben Dias,
Chief AI Scientist,
IAG

BEN DIAS

TITLE: **CHIEF AI SCIENTIST**
COMPANY: **IAG**
INDUSTRY: **AIRLINE**
LOCATION: **UK**

As Chief AI Scientist at IAG, Ben leads a community of talented cross-functional AI teams, fostering a culture of innovation, collaboration and excellence, to ensure they maximise the ROI of the group's investments in machine learning and AI.

Additionally, AI is expected to refine dynamic pricing models, offering passengers more tailored pricing based on real-time data and booking patterns, an approach that balances profitability with enhanced customer satisfaction.

In terms of revolutionary shifts, the prospect of autonomous aircraft looms on the horizon, with AI potentially enabling a future where flights operate with minimal human intervention.

While fully autonomous commercial flights are still in development stages, the technology could reshape the industry, reducing operational costs, optimising routes, and potentially redefining passenger expectations of safety and efficiency.

The rise of AI-powered innovations across airlines shows that those willing to invest and adapt are better positioned to meet the changing landscape of air travel, particularly as passengers come to expect better experiences and airlines find ways to meet emission targets.

Embracing AI in the sky

The rapid integration of AI across the airline industry signifies a pivotal shift, where technology is not just an operational tool but a core strategy for growth and differentiation.

The examples of IAG and Pegasus Airlines show how AI applications are addressing diverse aspects of airline operations, from real-time maintenance and multilingual communications to data-driven customer service enhancements.

By focusing on the unique needs of their passengers and operational challenges, these airlines are setting a new standard for technology-driven efficiency and customer experience.

Beyond immediate operational benefits, AI presents airlines with a pathway toward a more sustainable future. With climate concerns now a priority for consumers and regulators alike, AI's ability to optimise fuel usage and streamline operations is more valuable than ever.

As AI technology evolves, airlines that lead in adoption and in-house innovation are positioned to redefine modern air travel.

The willingness of forward-thinking airlines to invest in AI may see their costs decrease and profits grow as a result. ○

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